

Cycling

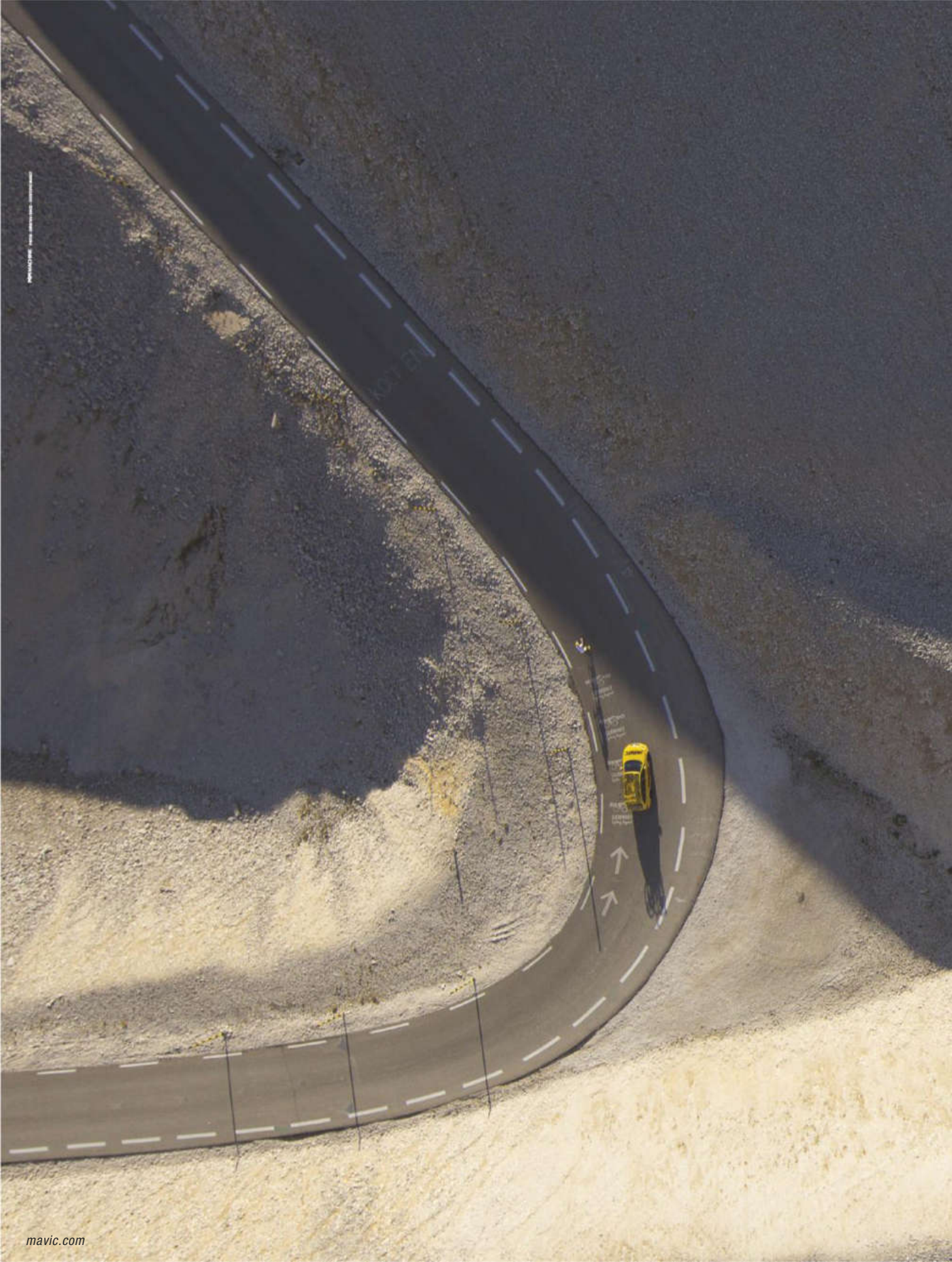
Thursday October 1, 2015

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WEEKLY

**Lizzie
Armitstead**
2015 world
champion





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Heroic Lizzie

Are there any superlatives left with which to describe Lizzie Armitstead's astonishing win last weekend? Or even Lizzie herself? The British woman has been the best rider in the world for the last two years with an incredible consistency throughout those seasons landing her two World Cup titles.

Now she has proven that she can turn it on, on the single biggest and most important day of the year. What's more, at the end of the Worlds road race she had to do it on her own — her young, talented team-mates weren't expected to make the final selection — and do it in full knowledge that she is one of the most visible and heavily marked riders in the women's peloton.

What's more, she did it with a level of panache that made it seem easy. Sometimes a rider nails their tactics so decisively that it makes you think, "Well, why don't they just always do that?" When they execute it so perfectly, the ease at which they do it belies the effort involved. By attacking just before the line — to drag a group away — and then winning the sprint to the line, Armitstead displayed a strength that no one could match.

Everyone, including herself, knew she had the capacity to win the World Champs, but knowing you can do it and actually doing it are two completely different things.

A brilliant day for British cycling, and I'm sure the plaudits have only just begun.



Simon Richardson,
Acting editor

Photos: Balint Hanvas, Phil O'Connor, Daniel Gould, Jessie Wild



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Armitstead on top of the Worlds

Victory in Virginia is new career high

Richard Abraham in Richmond

Britain's Lizzie Armitstead took the greatest win of her career to claim the iconic rainbow jersey of world champion in the USA last week.

The Yorkshirewoman was one of the standout favourites for the 129.6-kilometre race around the streets of Richmond, Virginia, and rode the perfect final two laps to dismantle her rivals' chances and win the reduced bunch sprint to the line.

She hardly had time to celebrate as she broke down in tears over the line, putting her hand to her mouth in astonishment.

"I believed in myself, and I knew I had to race selfishly and patiently," Armitstead said. "I knew I had better legs, that physically I was the strongest, and I was pretty confident in my plan."

Armitstead moved to the front of the race on the last cobbled climbs of Libby Hill and 23rd Street and attacked on the final drag of Governor Street to draw out her rivals and distance the pure sprinters. She then waited for the wheel of Anna van der Breggen before coming around the Dutchwoman with ease.

"I think some people raised their eyebrows in the team meeting when I said I wanted to attack and sprint, but I knew that was the best way to play it," added Armitstead.

The 26-year-old, whose world title caps a season that includes the national road race title and the World Cup series, admitted to pre-race nerves but praised the positivity of her young British team even though they were unable to help in the finale.

"Going into it I was in a great mindset because I was surrounded by such great girls. That meant that I believed in myself," she said.

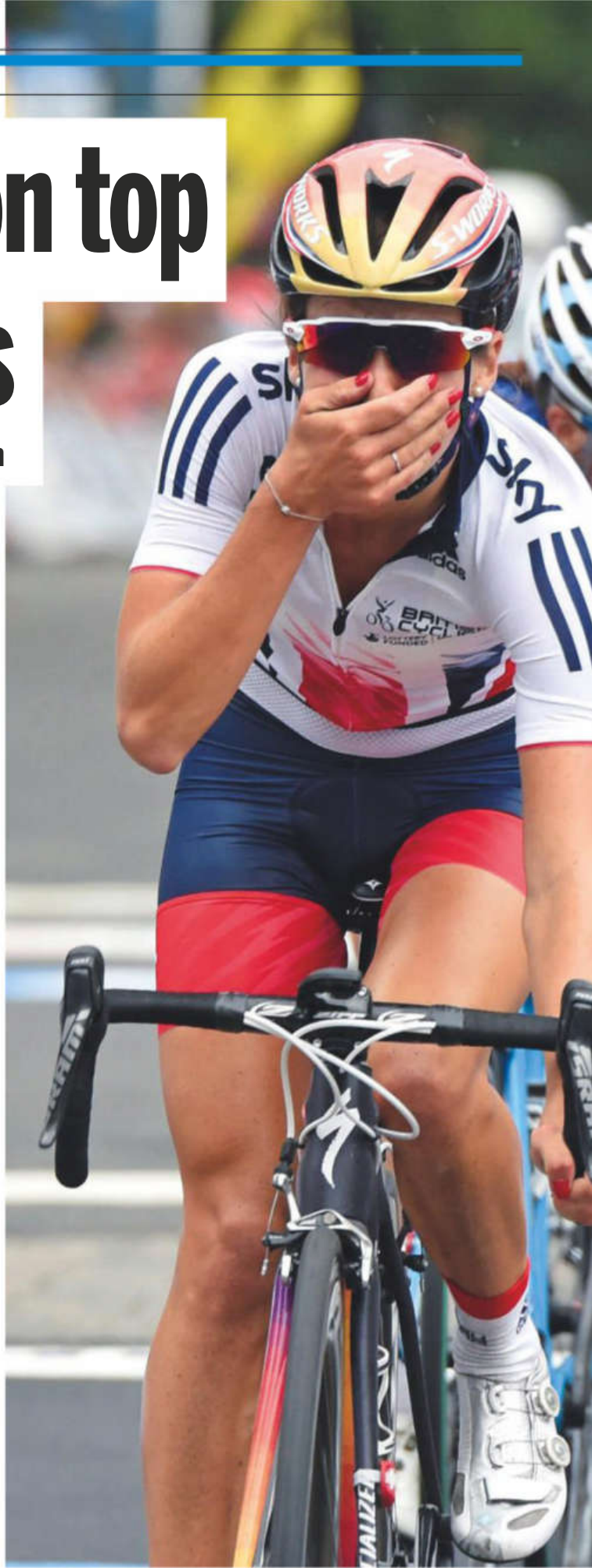
"It just went perfectly. I prepared the best I could, physically I was in the best shape possible and you have to have Lady Luck on your side, and she was with me today."

Armitstead becomes the fourth British woman after Beryl Burton, Mandy Jones and Nicole Cooke to take the world road race title. She will build her 2016 season around the Rio Olympics road race and the hilly Classics, but for now it's a well-deserved off-season break.

"I did think about what it would be like being world champion. The reality is really weird, but just as good," she said. "Back home in Otley there will be a few congratulations cards through the door but it won't be too different. I think people were probably more worried about the rugby!"

■ World Championships coverage starts on page 64.

Photos: Graham Watson





Rio: end of the road for Lizzie?

Lizzie Armitstead has admitted that she is considering retirement at the end of 2016 even though it could see her bowing out from the very top of the sport.

"It's possible, it really depends on how the season goes. It depends on all sorts," the new world champion said.

"As far as I'm concerned, as soon as you reach your goal then that's the box ticked for me, I don't feel the need to repeat titles or repeat victories, as soon as I get the one then I'm happy. So after Rio I don't know what I'll do, that's really just a massive question mark."

The Rio Olympics and the Tour of Flanders remain the two biggest goals on Armitstead's radar; she explained that she is unlikely to target an overall win in the revamped Women's WorldTour competition next year due to the number of stage races on the calendar.

Armitstead, who turns 27 in December and recently got engaged to Sky rider Philip Deignan, explained that retirement at the end of 2016 wouldn't leave her feeling as though she had left the sport too early.

"I've been, I would say, a professional cyclist since I was 16, and being completely devoted to cycling for 10 years is a very long time to be in an elite sport and it's a sacrifice that not many people understand," she said. "It wouldn't feel like I was walking away, though I've not made that decision yet."

"I want a family, so that's important to me, and you have to make time for that, quite a lot of time. And then a career, I need to get a proper job, so if you've got any ideas, please send them to me!"

MY VIEW...

Richard Abraham

Cycling Weekly news writer

The secret to Armitstead's win was that she wasn't afraid to lose. It allowed her to race on instinct and rely on her natural talent. When she does that, there are few riders in the world who can come close.



Lizzie's road to the top

'Landmark' Worlds victory all down to schoolmate's teasing, says Briton

Richard Abraham

With two World Cup titles, three senior British road race championships, an Olympic silver medal, a team pursuit world title on the track, and now a rainbow jersey on the road, Lizzie Armitstead has come a long way from the teenager who was first spotted riding around her school playing field by the British Cycling Talent Team in 2004.

She only bothered, she recalled the morning after her Worlds win, because it got her out of a maths lesson and a friend had teasingly been telling her she wouldn't be able to beat him. "Otherwise I'd have just ridden round, taken the lesson off school and not really worried about it, so I do owe a lot to him for teasing me!" she said.

Armitstead's first international taste of success was silver in the scratch race at the 2005 Junior Track World Championships; 10 years later her most recent achievement in Richmond, Virginia, was praised by UCI president Brian Cookson and by his successor as British Cycling president, Bob Howden.

"This is a landmark moment in the history of British Cycling," said Howden. "Lizzie represents the best of our sport and deserves all of the praise coming her way.

"Her coolness under pressure in that final kilometre is the hallmark



Armitstead and team-mates celebrate

of all great champions of cycling. She was the pride of Yorkshire and Great Britain already — now she's the best in the world."

However, Armitstead's victory was very different in nature to that of the last British road race world champion, Mark Cavendish. Her own personal 'project rainbow jersey' involved close work with her Boels-Dolmans trade team boss Danny Stam, with whom she has worked since late 2011.

"I came out here with Danny and we did a recce of the course in June so from then onwards I've catered my training around this," she said.

"Every World Championship in the last two seasons I've felt realistically I was in physical shape to win. But there's been no specific project rainbow jersey, it's very much been an independent job."

She added: "I think every cyclist dreams of the rainbow jersey. It's the jersey that everyone recognises, so I'll wear it with pride and take the responsibility seriously."

Guest column

Hayley Simmonds



"Although we were nervous there was a good energy — we knew Lizzie was in the shape of her life to do this"

There are a lot of things I'll take from the Worlds: not just the size of the event, and the pressure of them. I'm not used to having things done for me, for example. For the last two years, it's been myself and my other half going to races and doing everything for ourselves: we do it together, we developed a process. I know the GB mechanics and soigneurs will do everything to the highest standard, it's just a different rhythm. Hopefully I'll get another chance to come back to another Worlds, feel prepared and know how to get the best out of myself on the day.

It was terrifying sitting on the start ramp, waiting to get the countdown to start the time trial. I was pretty bad from Monday, actually. I got increasingly nervous as the days went on before I started and, with hindsight, I would have tried to be more relaxed before it. I'm not that displeased with the ride and the power I put out, I just hoped that that sort of ride would place me a bit higher than 26th.

A lot of people said we were a very young and inexperienced team for the road race, so it was nice to be able to do what we could for Lizzie and for her to be able to pull it off. The evening before at dinner, I can't even remember why, but there were laughing fits and everything, so although we were nervous there was good energy and Lizzie was confident in her form — we all had confidence in her form — so we knew that she was in the shape of her life to do this.

After the race we met up with some of the American girls, it was Lizzie's team-mate Evelyn Stevens's hen do that evening, and they kind of led us around some bars and we had a bit of a celebration. I'm not really looking forward to going back to the lab to work on my PhD, but I'm going to try to finish it off as quickly as I can, and then ride full time next year.

British time trial champion Hayley Simmonds made her World Championships debut in Richmond. She was back working on her PhD the following Tuesday.



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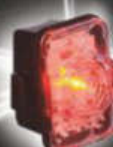
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Sagan lands the rainbow bands

Richard Abraham

Peter Sagan finally got the rainbow jersey his career had been missing as he won the World Championships men's road race in emphatic fashion in Richmond, Virginia, last Sunday.

Sagan soloed to the line after breaking clear on the final cobbled climb of 23rd Street with two kilometres remaining; despite his right foot momentarily coming unclipped on the Governor Street drag, he remained cool and in control to the finish. Without a trademark victory salute, he got off his bike, turned to walk back towards the finish and high-fived his fellow riders, including Tom Boonen. He then chucked his helmet, gloves and sunglasses into the crowd.

"I did just one attack, and I think it was the right attack," he said. "I was waiting,

waiting. I gave all the energy I had. I was hoping for the last cobbled climb, and from there it was just gas it to the finish."

Perfect timing

Sagan is a popular winner, and a year of the Slovak showman in the rainbow jersey is a mouthwatering prospect for the sport. On the podium, he thumped his chest, a reference to the film *The Wolf of Wall Street*, and pretended to swallow his gold medal as he posed with it in his teeth. He was then tossed into the air by his team-mates, and in the post-race interview in broken English he deviated from post-race analysis to opine on the European migrant crisis and the future of humanity.

Yet Sagan was all but invisible throughout the race, keeping himself well hidden in the bunch as the pace ratcheted up and dangerous moves came and went.

For a man whose career has been marked by tactical frustrations and a run of second places, this move was decisive and irrepressible.

Behind him, many of the race favourites fought for the scraps, with Michael Matthews (Australia) cutting a dejected figure after finishing second. Lithuania's Ramunas Navardauskas was third while Ben Swift finished 22nd, the best of the British riders.

"I was hovering around Sagan most of the day but got caught up in a crash with about six laps to go and made a big effort to get back after that," Swift told *Cycling Weekly*.

"On the last lap, I followed the guys up the climb but I think that was my move. I went round the last corner in about fifth and when they opened up the sprint that was it, I went backwards."

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Oldham triumphs at the Three Peaks

Thirty-eight-year-old achieves lifetime ambition and beats Rob Jebb

Snowdon Sports

Nineteen years since he first rode the Three Peaks, Paul Oldham finally secured victory in the 2015 edition of the epic 61km Yorkshire cyclo-cross race. The Hope Factory Racing rider, who is just returning to full fitness after missing most of 2014 due to injuries, broke Rob Jebb's and Nick Craig's stranglehold on the race for the first time in 16 years.

Oldham, 38, clocked 2-59-33 to win by 1-16 from 11-time winner Jebb (Hope), with Craig (Scott) three minutes back in third. This year's race was held in sunshine, although some of the fells were slightly boggier than expected — a far cry from Oldham's debut in the race.

"I've been trying to win this since 1996," said Oldham. "In that one, I got carted off with hypothermia. Since then, I've had 12 starts and 10 finishes, and it's great to have won it.

"It was a tough race today. Rob ran off on the first peak [at Ingleborough], but I caught him on the descent. Then, on the

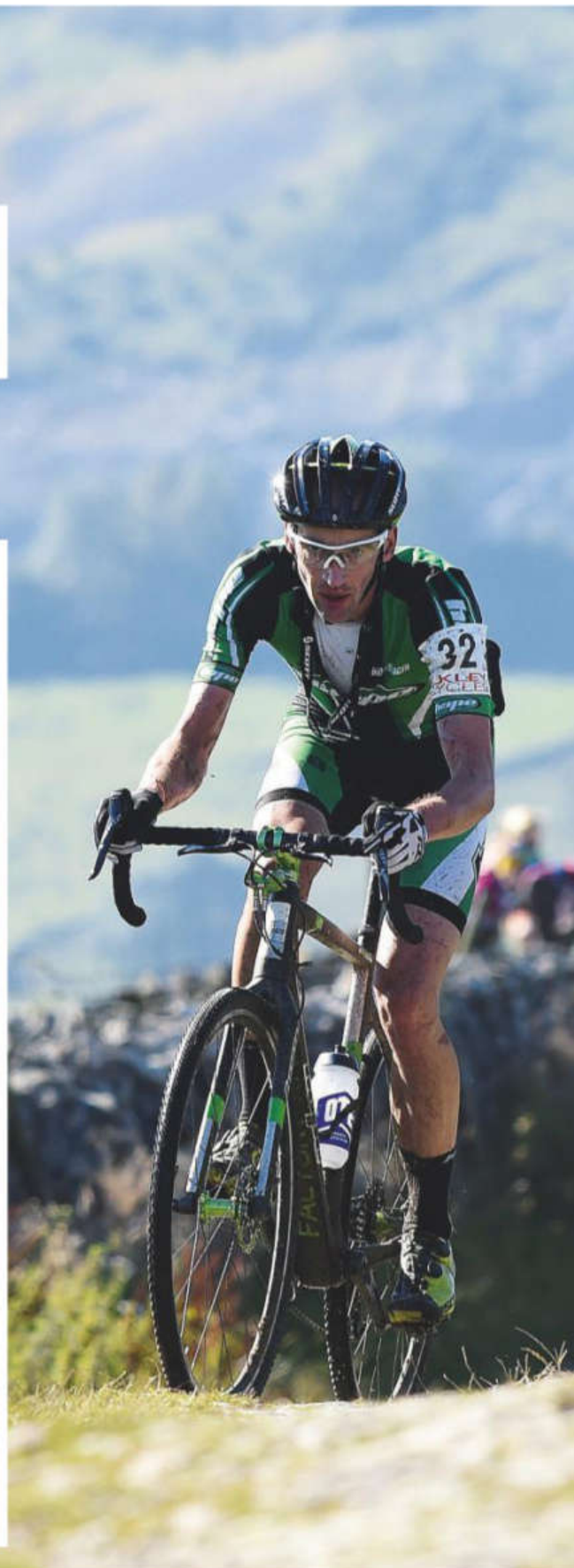
second peak [at Whernside], he ran off again. Then I punctured but managed to catch him again on the descent."

The pair headed for Pen-y-ghent together, before Oldham distanced Jebb by around a minute. But that came down to 20 seconds as they headed for the top, and Oldham wasn't helped by a crash. However, the gap grew on the descent and he held his advantage to the finish.

"To win against Rob is amazing. He's a legend. I'll try to be back to defend my title next year if I can," Oldham said.

As well as winning the Three Peaks, Oldham has clinched the last three rounds of the Yorkshire Cyclo-Cross Series — remarkable given the shoulder, cruciate ligament and facial injuries he has suffered over the last 12 months.

Fastest woman was Jules Toone (Torq Performance), who finished in 3-57-07 to beat 2014 winner Verity Appleyard (Brotherton Cycles) by just over four minutes, with 2006 winner Isla Rowntree (Islabike) placing third, 11-53 in arrears.





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Marchant dominant at Track Nationals

Former heptathlete in frame for Rio Olympics after winning four titles

Nick Bull

Katy Marchant was the star of the show at last weekend's National Track Championships, winning all four sprint titles on offer in Manchester. Following in the footsteps of Becky James and Jess Varnish, who have also achieved the feat in recent years, the 22-year-old Leeds born Marchant continued the good form she showed at August's Revolution Series meeting in Derby. Marchant beat James and Varnish to the individual titles and, with Varnish, won the team sprint crown.

Marchant told *Cycling Weekly*: "It couldn't have gone much better, could it? I had set some personal goals for the championships — one of them was to get a PB in the flying 200m and go under 11.1 seconds, and when I achieved that on the first morning, I realised I was going OK."

With next summer's Rio Olympics on the horizon, Marchant's results in Manchester put her firmly

in the frame for selection: a remarkable feat, given the former heptathlete was only accepted on to British Cycling's Olympic Academy Programme in April 2013.

"It's been a whirlwind," she said. "I've taken it my stride; I'm a laid-back person and I've done what the coaches have asked me to do."

"It was a massive risk changing sports, but something inside of me was saying it was a massive opportunity,

and that it was something I should take on.

"I didn't anticipate it going in this direction so quickly, though. But hearing the word Rio is a motivation — it's a get up and go."

Trott on form

Elsewhere, Laura Trott took three titles in the women's points, scratch and individual pursuit events, and Dame Sarah Storey's Pearl Izumi-Sports Tours International

squad — comprising Katie Archibald, Ciara Horne, Joanna Rowsell Shand, three of Britain's female endurance squad — won the team pursuit on the weekend that it was announced they will register as a UCI Women's Professional Team for 2016.

Sir Bradley Wiggins pulled out of the championships through illness, but his teammate Andy Tennant added the British pursuit title to his European one from last year.

British Track Championships winners

Women's 500m TT: Katy Marchant (Unattached)

Women's sprint: Katy Marchant (Unattached)

Women's keirin: Katy Marchant (Unattached)

Women's team sprint: North West Region C (Katy Marchant and Jess Varnish)

Women's points race: Laura Trott (Matrix)

Women's scratch race: Laura Trott (Matrix)

Women's individual pursuit: Laura Trott (Matrix)

Women's team pursuit: Pearl Izumi-Sports Tours International (Katie Archibald, Ciara Horne, Joanna Rowsell Shand, Dame Sarah Storey)

Men's 1km TT: Jason Kenny (Unattached)

Men's sprint: Lewis Oliva (Team USN)

Men's keirin: Matt Crampton (Unattached)

Men's team sprint: North West Region (Philip

Hindes, Jason Kenny and Matt Crampton)

Men's points race: Oliver Wood (100% ME)

Men's scratch race: Mark Stewart (100% ME)

Men's individual pursuit: Andy Tennant (Team Wiggins)

Men's team pursuit: 100% ME (Germain Burton, Jake Kelly, Mark Stewart and Oliver Wood)

Para-cycling mixed C1-C5 200m TT: Jody Cundy (Para-T)

Para-cycling mixed C1-C5 pursuit: Jonathan Gildea (SportGrub-Kuota)

Para-cycling mixed B/Vi 200m TT: Sophie Thornhill and Helen Scott (Performance)

Para-cycling mixed B/Vi pursuit: Lora Turnham and Corrine Hall (Epic Racing)

Photo: Andy Jones





**Marchant outstrips
Varnish in the
women's sprint**

Transfer market latest

Sky announced six signings for 2016 last week, headed by Etixx-Quick Step's Michal Kwiatkowski and Spanish duo Mikel Landa and Beñat Intxausti, from Astana and Movistar. Dutch sprinter Danny Van Poppel also joins from Trek, alongside Kwiatkowski's team-mate Michal Golas and Italian under-23 champion Gianni Moscon. Cannondale-Garmin continued to bolster their roster by signing Australian Simon Clarke from Orica-GreenEdge, while British squad One added Kiwi trio Dion Smith, James Oram and Hayden McCormick. Frenchman Matthieu Boulo rejoined Raleigh-GAC from Bretagne-Séché.

UCI lifts radio ban

The UCI has made a U-turn on its ban on race radios in events outside the WorldTour, meaning two-way communication between riders and teams will now be allowed in .1 and .HC-ranked races. The decision ends years of controversy since the ban was introduced in 2011. The sport's governing body also announced an overhaul to the WorldTour last week, to come into effect for 2017, including three-year licences for the 18 teams, new races and a new ranking system.

Phillips secures record second BMX title

Liam Phillips became the first person to secure back-to-back UCI BMX Supercross World Cup titles last weekend. The 26-year-old from Taunton finished sixth at the last event of the season in Rock Hill, South Carolina, but scored enough points to retain the title and make history in the process.

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Peter Kennaugh broke Chris Boardman's 22-year-old course record for the Isle of Man Mountain TT on Sunday. The Sky rider, who opted out of selection for Great Britain's World Championships team because of the birth of his first child, set a time of 1-23-54 for the challenging 37.72-mile course, six seconds quicker than Boardman's record.

MTN-Qhubeka changes name

MTN-Qhubeka is to be renamed Team Dimension Data for 2016, after the global IT company confirmed long-standing rumours linking it to the squad's title sponsorship. Financial consultancy company Deloitte has joined the African squad as a 'Gold Sponsor' next season in a move likely to pave the way for Mark Cavendish to join the ProContinental team. Bernie Eisel's departure from Sky adds credence to the suggestion that he will ride with the Manxman once again at his new squad next year.

Basso given cancer all-clear

Ivan Basso has been given the all-clear after being diagnosed with testicular cancer at the Tour de France in July. Doctors confirmed that the Italian, who won the Giro in 2006 and 2010, requires no further treatment after responding well to surgery. The 37-year-old withdrew from the Tour on its first rest day after a tumour was discovered.



Basso: successfully treated for cancer

Weekly column Rob Hayles



“The world-class performances we see are the culmination of months or years of work. The same applies to bike shows”

Most people are well aware of the fact that when they see a world-class performance on a bike, what they are witnessing is the cherry on the cake, the tip of the iceberg, or whichever ‘final piece’ metaphor you prefer.

In other words, the bit we all see is the culmination of a lot of extremely hard work. What we see is so often such a small percentage of the overall workload that has gone into each performance. The planning, the off-season riding and early-season training camps that go on away from the limelight of competition is often where the podium places are won or lost.

Getting stuck in

Now, on the face of it, my life has changed quite a bit since the days of wearing a number on my back. But I think the reality is that, in many ways, I'm still following a similar path. I'm writing this week's column from a hotel room after the first of four days exhibiting at the NEC Cycle Show in Birmingham.

I'm here with Beacon Bikes, with whom I've worked and whose products I've helped develop over the last four years. Our stand, like all the others at the show, was a long time in the designing and making. Similarly, the bikes we were showing didn't just magically appear for all the public to gaze upon. They have been, like the performances of our cycling heroes and heroines, weeks, month and years in the making.

From design, testing and manufacture, to going on sale for public consumption, they have taken many man-hours to put together. The reality is that for me and so many other former bike riders, we never actually retire.

In a physical sense, we cease our exertions, but in reality it's more like a change in role. Having said that, after spending most of a day helping the guys unload a truck's worth of bikes, stands and wall units, I'm not sure I've even retired physically. Those bikes really don't appear by magic, you know.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He's also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor

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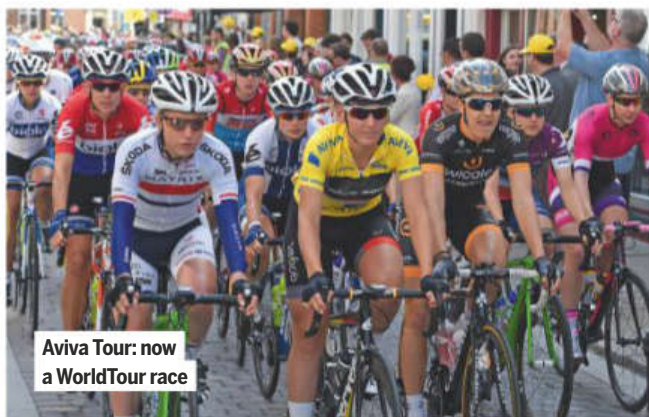
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UK events to bolster women's racing

UCI includes two British races in new Women's WorldTour

Owen Rogers

Two British races will be included in the new UCI Women's WorldTour, the revamped and rebranded replacement for the World Cup for 2016. The Aviva Women's Tour and Prudential RideLondon Grand Prix will feature in the season-long competition comprising 35 days of racing.

While this year's World Cup consisted entirely of one-day races, the new series will include four stage races: the flagship Giro d'Italia Femminile, the Tours of California and Chongming Island in China, and the Women's Tour.

The Women's Tour's presence in the series was essential according to Guy Elliot from race organiser SweetSpot. "We want to be up with the very best events in the world, so it was absolutely critical for us to be in there," he said.

SweetSpot is also involved with the RideLondon GP,

which will join La Course and the Madrid Challenge to make three city-centre races in the season-long competition. Inclusion of the race, which is likely to maintain its current criterium format around Westminster, was a major coup for organisers as it did not meet the governing body's qualifying criteria of being an existing UCI-ranked race.

"I think the UCI are trying to revitalise the women's calendar and they're great showcases for women's cycling," said Elliot.

Points will be awarded throughout the season and classifications awarded for the best individual, young rider and team.

A women's edition of the Lincoln Grand Prix was seeking WorldTour status, but will run as part of British Cycling's Women's National Road Series event instead.

However, *CW* understands that a new women's race at the Velothon Wales (May 22) is seeking late inclusion on the 2016 WorldTour calendar.

To do this week...

Watch Clay Bank and Carlton Bank hill-climbs, Sunday, October 4

These two entrance roads to the North York Moors play host to a pair of demanding hill-climbs, both of which ramp up to a one-in-four gradient. Cleveland Wheelers host their event on Clay Bank at 10am, before a 2pm start time in the Stockton Wheelers event on Carlton Bank eight miles away — allowing many riders and spectators to take in both events on the same day.

www.clevelandwheelers.com and www.stocktonwheelers.org.uk



Enter Culloden Cycle Challenge, Saturday, October 10

Kicking off from the site of the Battle of Culloden (1746), there are three route options on offer in this Scottish sportive: the 85-mile Big Battle, which features 4,009ft of climbing, the 42-mile Wee Battle and the 21-mile Skirmish. Organiser Mick Greaves said: "The ride crosses a lot of hills that are bleak and exposed, an area and hills that cyclists must ride."

Entry £15-£35. www.hivelo.co.uk

Ride Lewis Balyckyi Memorial Ride, Sunday, October 4

Held in memory of Lewis Balyckyi, who was killed while on a training ride in 2011, this is now the fourth edition of this fund-raising event that supports young and upcoming riders. There are three routes of 32, 70 and 100km, all held on Balyckyi's favourite roads through the Trough of Bowland, in Lancashire. Entry online £15, on the day £20.

po.st/BalyckyiRide

Go Dave Rayner Fund Dinner, Saturday, November 7

Tickets are now on sale for the charity's annual dinner, which celebrates the year's cycling successes while also raising money to help promising young talent race abroad. Held at New Dock Hall, Leeds, it's often a star-studded affair — Tour de France stage winner Steve Cummings will be there this year — while there is a three-course meal, auction and raffle of unique cycling memorabilia. All money raised goes to the fund.

Tickets £49.95. po.st/DRaynerDinner

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THE BIG QUESTION

What is your verdict on this year's Tour of Britain?

Best one yet. Brilliant race and brilliant organisation. The Tour of Britain is here to stay!

Malcolm Trueman

The Tour of Britain was amazing for our homegrown cyclists as well as GC teams and riders, and great for all the cycling enthusiasts in this country to get behind the teams and show their support.

Lorraine Holmes

Rarely a good route; never spends sufficient time in Yorkshire.

Andrew Bell

It was good, but with all the potential great riding in Scotland, why only go as far north as Edinburgh?

Aidan Mulhall

Good, but maybe some stages shouldn't have such a long trip in between. I wanted to watch stages six and seven but they were too far apart. I agree that Scotland is an option. Also, Northamptonshire/Oxfordshire could do with a slot. And stop finishing in London. Birmingham is a good place to end the race.

Mike Gough

A team time trial on the last day would be good.

Justin Steele

We thought it was brilliant, loved every stage, especially Stoke to Nottingham (our area).

Suzanne Beardsley

It would be great if it had a stage on the Isle of Wight. No mountains but great scenery and twisting roads.

Margaret Potter

Needs a proper mountain stage in Scotland.

Alan Bittle

This year's ToB was generally praised by CW readers



The London stage was better than in previous years. Having a hub at Trafalgar Square was ace. Why not have the podium there, though?

Giles Cudmore

I was lucky enough to see the Suffolk and London stages. The narrow lanes of Suffolk made for great viewing, as the peloton was well stretched out, while the London course was far better than in previous years. So close to the action — a great family day out.

Tim Tate

Edvald Boasson Hagen was a worthy winner, and it's great to see him back at the top in the race that brought him to the attention of the public. His attacking style really brought several stages to life.

Harry Worthing

Despite moans from some quarters that the race didn't visit their street, I

think the organisers do a good job of balancing out a good spread of stages and not having really ridiculous transfers for the riders. It must be a nightmare trying to predict how long transfers will take between stages on Britain's overcrowded road network.

Steve Wootton

Aside from Edvald Boasson Hagen's great performance, the ride of the ToB for me has to be Owain Doull's. Great to see a young British rider taking on some of the world's best sprinters — and being led out by the great Sir Bradley Wiggins. Memorable scenes.

Lindsay Barker

Next week's big question...

How do you keep your cycling fitness levels up over the winter months?

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Letters

Letter of the week
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Queen was the king

STAR
LETTER

After my father-in-law Roger Queen passed away back in 2012, the fond memories of his racing stories inspired me to take up this fantastic sport. I joined my local club and was introduced to time trialling. After my first season, I could see exactly why Roger loved racing so much.

Those who knew Roger always said what a great athlete he was, as well as being a well-rounded gent off the bike too. Some cyclists would do well to follow his example. Why is it so difficult to just be courteous to others? We need more people in the world of cycling like Roger Queen.

Chris, Bedfordshire

Basic maths

Some basic maths for cyclists: last year's model will be reduced by 20 per cent, and the Bike to Work scheme will shave off a further 30 per cent. So a £1,200 bike would cost £700. Ride this bike 100 times for two hours and it equals £3.50 per hour. This is much cheaper than an hour in the pub, a takeaway, a hairdo, getting your nails done or buying a coffee.

Rob Glover, Yorkshire

Tickhill was terrific

I thought I would write in to say what a fantastic full day of races I had at the Tickhill Grand Prix. The men's elite race was decided in an amazing sprint finish between five riders from five different top teams: Chris Lawless of Team Wiggins just pipped JLT-Condor rider Graham Briggs to the post by 0.099 of a second.

The women's elite race was

also hotly contested and saw Gabriella Shaw from Pearl Izumi Sports Tours International named winner, claiming the £1,000 prize and iconic Tickhill Trophy — importantly, the exact same prize as offered in the men's race.

Ali, email

Living the dream

Years ago, I had a friend who used to subscribe to all the cycling magazines. His followed his dream and opened his own mountain bike shop. My dream is to become a writer — and *Cycling Weekly* would be my magazine of choice.

Cycling for me really is all about getting out there and doing what you want to do. I have never competed; I leave that to the athletes. Just heading off on my bike now to pick up the latest issue.

William Gillon, email

CW's greatest fan

The great Eddy Merckx was very interested in your 'Cycling Legends' special edition. I had asked him to autograph my copy at the Eddy Merckx Classic Charity Ride in Austria, a couple of weeks ago, and he willingly obliged. It took him 10 minutes, as he wished to show his team-mates many of the photos included.

I didn't mind, as it gave me the chance to spend some time with him — and I managed to end up finishing the 106km ride with him the next day. Many thanks for producing such an excellent collection of photos and articles of the greatest cyclist ever.

Roy Taylor, email

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Johnny Helms was *Cycling Weekly's* resident cartoonist from February 1946 until November 2009.

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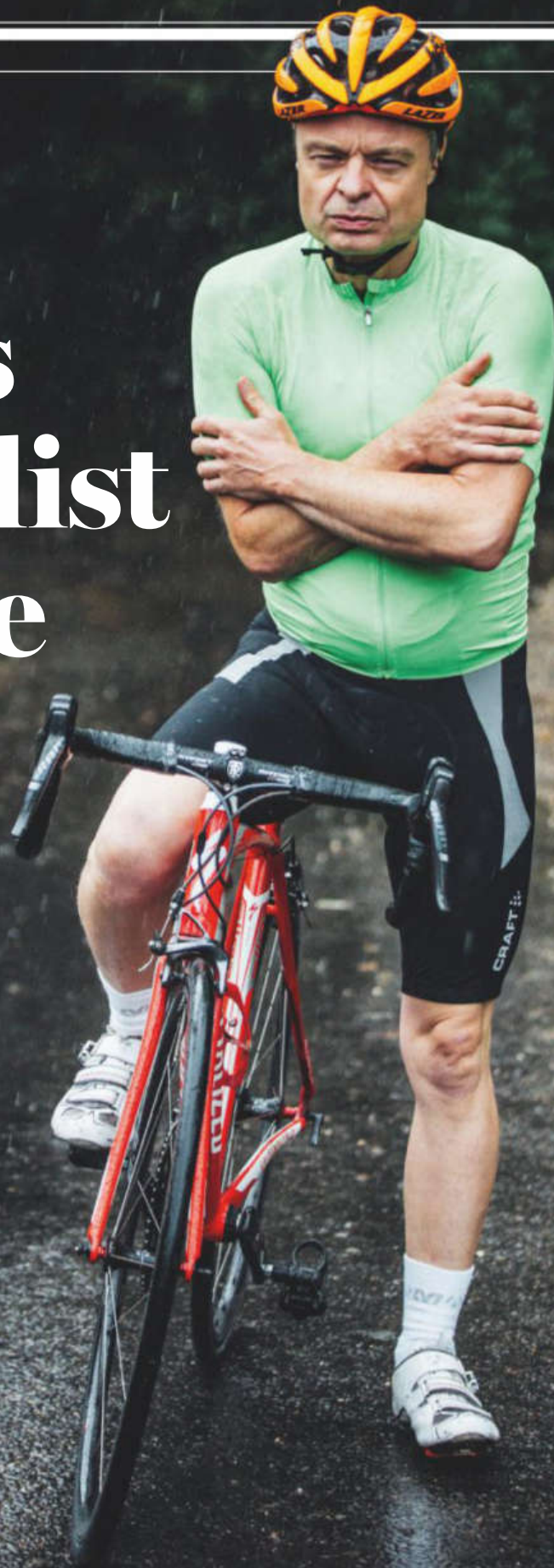


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Mistakes every cyclist has made

CW takes a look at those embarrassing moments that as riders we're all guilty of — and would rather forget



Dave Barter

Ask any cyclist to describe their worst moment on the bike and they'll invariably describe the day they completely emptied the tank on a hard ride, falling victim to that most prevalent of cycling diseases: the bonk. Fellow cyclists nod sagely on hearing that phrase. In other sports, the word would produce a quizzical look or a childish laugh at its other connotation.

But in our world we know it as a classic cycling faux pas; the simple act of paying too much attention to the ride and neglecting the energy requirements of the human powering it. Every one of us can confess to having bonked and our bonks have been many and varied, scattered across the world and in a wide variety of situations. They range from humiliation in the middle of club runs to solo distress calls made to friends or family plaintively requesting a lift home.

However, the bonk is only one in a list of cycling cock-ups that many of us should own up to.

From the casual rider to the seasoned professional, every one of us could draw on one or more examples from the following list if we were seeking atonement at the cycling confessional.

The cycling panty line

There is no escaping the fact that a lot of cycling apparel leaves little to the imagination. Take any podium photograph of a professional men's team and you'll be able to rank them by more than their performance on the bike. But Lycra shorts are designed to be more than just budgie smugglers; they're meant to stretch as you move and thus prevent chafing. And here is our first classic mistake — wearing underpants with bibshorts.

This is usually only done once. The naive rider will quickly fall victim to an adult form of nappy rash as the pants bunch up and rub away at the nether regions. However, this will be the least of their worries were they to be spotted by a fellow rider, who will more than likely fall from their bike in hysterics as they view the approaching Y-front panty line, accentuated perfectly by the tight-fitting shorts.

Only Superman can be in pants with Lycra and he has to wear them on the outside — to prevent chafing of course.

Third-cat tat

You've invested in an expensive race bike, you've just about got to grips with group riding, you've even managed to gain a few points and moved up to the dizzy heights of a third-category bike racer. Shaven legged, you stand astride your bike ready to race, but are wondering why the higher category riders around you are shaking their heads.

They've spotted your 'third-cat tat', a perfect imprint in oil of your largest chainring upon your right leg. The tattoo is a combination of three failings. First is the inability to keep your bike spotlessly clean thus allowing your chainrings to carry grime. Second is the lack of mastery of static bike-handling skills — the correct stance is low on the top tube, legs wide apart. By far the greatest crime is the use of the smaller ring. The third-cat tat tells all and sundry that you've retreated to the easier gears before the race has even started.

The forgotten sidecar

If you ever see a motorcyclist fall over at traffic lights, help them to their feet and sympathise with their plight. This is undoubtedly a rider who has forgotten that they removed the sidecar from their bike. We cyclists can find ourselves in a similar situation. You pull up at the lights, gracefully come to a halt and in a sudden moment of horror realise that you've forgotten to unclip. An instant of

indecision is all it takes as you attempt to decide on which side to place a foot on the ground. But by now it's too late, as the bike makes its own decision and you crash to the floor.

Concerned pedestrians help you to

your feet and dust you off, compounding your situation as all you want to do is swear, very loudly, but are forced into gracious thanks and implausible explanations instead. We've all done it, often in the first few rides of getting clipless pedals. But, such is the embarrassment, you'll

never forget to unclip again.

“How many of us suffer the force of the weather in a short-sleeved jersey and shorts?”

The Nora Batty

As cyclists, we owe it to our peers to promote our sport and ensure that the public see our activity as worthwhile. This requires a small effort every ride to ensure bystanders do not have the impression that we're cast members on a tea break from *Last of the Summer Wine*.

Leg-warmers are meant to be pulled up at all times to keep the legs warm. Yet how many times have unsuspecting riders let them slip down the knee, delivering a full Nora Batty wrinkle that will only be appreciated by an attentive Compo? Worse still is when they slip down so far there's a small flash of flesh revealed. Leg-warmers should be kept up by the development of muscular thighs, which are designed to hold them properly in place. Suspenders are out ▶



Failing to fix a flat guarantees impatient tutting on the next ride



“Getting lost can lead to a tramp across fields in search of tarmac”

of the question for the same reasons as discussed in the cycling panty line.

The walk of shame

There are any number of reasons you might find yourself walking your bike up a hill — but none of them are good. Perhaps you crunched your gears and broke your chain, cramped after 150 miles, stalled out of a dead turn in a big gear or wheelspun on wet cobbles and couldn't get started again. However valid you think your excuse, it still never feels nice and you'll want to rid that shameful walk from your memory as quickly as possible. Whatever happens, avoid doing it on a top-of-the-range bike, and in front of other riders — or a photographer. They'll be sure to never let you forget it.

Puncture procrastination

Punctures are the bane of every cyclist's life and all too often they occur near the end of a ride as you reach the point of exhaustion and just want to get home.

It's all too tempting to limp home on an ever-flattening tyre, resolving to sort out the leak after a shower. But then the distraction of a comfy sofa, cold beer or hot meal gets in the way and you ignore the airless tube with a whispered *mañana*. How many of us forget about

our wilting wheel until the next ride? We kit up and prepare for a quick blast on the bike, only to suffer our own deflation when confronted with the puncture we'd forgotten to fix. Our riding partners sit waiting for us, tapping their watches as we desperately flail around the garage with pump and rubber solution.

The 'wish you were here'

Almost every cycling event has some sort of kit requirement and almost every cyclist has forgotten at least one piece of kit, only realising on arrival. This explains the rider in the AC/DC T-shirt halfway round the Dragon Ride on a rainy day.

It also accounts for the guy in trainers bravely hammering away at clipless pedals or the young female time triallist with the Coke can rattling away in her bottle cage. Mario Cipollini famously left his cycling kit behind when taking part in many a professional race, and was often forced to perform in loaned fancy dress, including zebra-inspired costume and one borrowed from an anatomist.

Impromptu cyclo-cross

Navigation is a vital part of cycling, both riding solo in new territory or as leader of an organised ride. Knowing when you're lost is equally important, as is

holding yourself back from blithely pressing on into uncharted territory in the vain hope that you're heading the right way. Frequently this ends in an overly long ride and occasionally a tramp across fields in search of tarmac as the road you were riding suddenly peters out. But if to turn around is to concede you don't know where you are, then the only other option is to carry on.

Forgetting the mirror check

Many of us are time pressured and don't have the luxury of extensive preparations for each trip out on the bike. But there are a number of pre-ride checks that are essential if ridicule is to be avoided on the roads. One of the most important is the final glance in the mirror to ensure that everything is how it should be.

That means no flappy straps on your helmet, your zips are done up and you haven't made a tail with the raincoat that you've shoved into your back pocket. While putting your shorts on inside out or your helmet on back-to-front are the clichés of coffee-stop jokes, we have proof that these are easy mistakes to make — especially with a hangover.

The pass of enduring pain

Cyclists are a competitive bunch and

many will seek any opportunity to display their prowess on the road. A rider ahead becomes a target that must be overtaken at all costs, allowing another notch to be carved on the down tube.

However, the attack must be sustained and many have made the mistake of an overly ambitious pass followed by miles of lactate threshold in order to maintain the gap. A rushed assessment of the opponent can quickly be followed by the ignominy of being repassed with a cheery 'hello'. Be especially cautious when approaching older people on electric bicycles.

The Michael Fish

All riders within Great Britain need to be properly attuned to the weather forecast no matter what time of year it is.

Yet how many of us use a cursory glance out of the window to dictate our riding attire for the day's epic loop? And how many of us suffer the full force of the British weather while pedalling miserably along in a short-sleeved jersey and shorts? Many a bus stop has hosted a shivering cyclist who should have known better as they desperately search for discarded plastic bags.

Spring has sprung

Your cycling elders will impart many sage pieces of advice to you over the years, from how to ride in a group to the best way to fix a buckled wheel. If you're lucky, one of them will take you aside one day and encourage you to keep



Flesh cleavage on your arm or leg-warmers is prohibited

your garage floor spotlessly clean. You may wonder why this is necessary until you fall victim to the mistaken belief that you can easily fix a complex part of the bike yourself. While wrestling with an 11-speed combined gear and brake shifter you hear a solitary ping and a small part of the assembly flies over your shoulder onto a dirty floor. No matter how long or hard you look, you will never find this crucial part — and an internet search will reveal that it cannot be purchased as a spare. Your shifter is now useless and a tail-between-the-legs trip to the bike shop is required where you must suffer the knowing glance of the coffee-grasping mechanic and the rubbing hands of the sales assistant.



Beware marking your inexperience with a third-cat tat

The pothole fixation

The human brain is a complex piece of kit able to carry out remarkable calculations within a split second. But sometimes a glitch in the machinery causes it to do strange things that often have unfortunate consequences.

Many cyclists have fallen victim to 'pothole fixation'. This is the act of spotting the pothole, acknowledging its existence, understanding the consequences of riding through it upon both rider and bicycle wheel, yet taking absolutely no evasive action whatsoever and subsequently paying a visit to a hedge accompanied by a buckled wheel and flat tyre.

This fixation often leads to another ailment known as 'obscurity cataloguing' — the act of verbally listing all the swear words that an individual has ever encountered... loudly.

The UKIP manoeuvre

Living in Blighty we're used to riding our bicycles on the left-hand side of the road. We are also accustomed to being rained on while we do this, therefore many of us seek warmer climes for our holidays where cyclists are required to position themselves on the other side of the road. The first outing of the holiday can often see the cyclist performing a 'UKIP' as they forget the requirements of the foreign land and mistakenly venture out upon the left. This is typically put 'right' by a blaring horn and avoiding manoeuvre. The correct side of the road is quickly learned. All is fine until the rider returns to the UK — and a 'reverse UKIP' is performed.

The pendulum

Every club ride has seen an unfortunate cyclist execute a 'pendulum' — the act of underestimating the difficulty of a climb, while over-egging their own ability.

The rider shoots out from the group at the start of the climb as the club elders resignedly tell the youngsters to "let him go, he'll be back". The aspiring climber looks good for the first 50 metres until the gradient takes its toll. He furiously chews at his handlebars to no avail as the rest of the club draw him in and ultimately leave him grovelling as he falls out the back. No mercy is shown until the top where the group patiently waits, arms folded, and serenades his summiting with the tapping of cleats on the road.

Timmis returns to Alpe d'Huez

In 1987 Adrian Timmis tackled Alpe d'Huez during the Tour de France with his ANC-Halfords team. On the same date this year he returned, on his old Peugeot bike and in his Eighties kit, to relive the day

Ellis Bacon

Riding and completing the Tour de France is the kind of career highlight that most pro riders can only dream of featuring on their palmarès. It's an achievement that 51-year-old former pro Adrian Timmis can proudly boast. Anyone in the vicinity of Alpe d'Huez on July 21 this year could have been forgiven for thinking that they'd stepped back in time to 1987, as Timmis once more took on the daunting climb in the French Alps, in the same kit and using the same equipment, 28 years to the day since he'd ridden it at the Tour.

In 1987 the 23-year-old Timmis had been part of the nine-man ANC-Halfords Tour de France squad, which was the first British trade team to take part in the world's biggest bike race. He was one of

only four riders from the team who finished what was a brutally long race, won by Ireland's Stephen Roche.

"I was going over to the Alps to watch the Tour anyway, but then a few weeks before I went, I noticed that this year's race finished in Paris on the same date that I finished it in Paris in 1987," Timmis explains. "So my head started ticking over, thinking that this wasn't likely to happen again any time soon."

This year's 20th and penultimate stage finished on Alpe d'Huez on July 25, so, four days before the Tour came to town, on the same date that he'd raced up the Alpe at the Tour, Timmis donned his old riding kit and jumped aboard the trusty Peugeot bike he'd used almost three decades before. He rode the climb once more, with friend Lee Westwood capturing pictures on a GoPro camera.

"It was a bit emotional," admits Timmis, "especially because my wife and daughter were there this time.

"And I was so pleased that Lee was there to take the photos on the way up. I enjoyed it this time," he laughs.

Dream

Followers of ANC-Halfords in the late Eighties might remember what became quite an iconic photo of Timmis and team-mate Malcolm Elliott struggling up the climb towards the back of the race. Timmis, however, says that he remembers very little of the day itself.

"I remember little bits. I remember [his good friends and former riders] Simon Burney and David Baker being there, and they poured a bottle of water over me, which they'd had in a mountain stream all day. It was ice cold and took my breath away...

"We'd done about 110 miles already by the time we'd got to the bottom of the climb, and it was a case of just trying to get to the top. Yeah — there's that picture of Malc and me, which has been around for years. I've been told by people no end of times that they used to have that as a poster on their bedroom walls!"

July 21 2015 also happened to be the day of Timmis's old ANC-Halfords team manager Tony Capper's funeral — a fact that Timmis was unaware of until the morning of his attempt on the Alpe.

Capper had steered the team towards a Tour berth, only for the outfit to run out of money, and for Capper to completely disappear from the scene before the end of the race. The ANC-Halfords team folded later that year.

"Tony was Tony, a character, but you couldn't knock him for having



Iconic image: Timmis (r) and Elliott on the Alpe



a dream,” Timmis reflects. “He got us into that Tour — his dream got us in. So it really came together on the day: July 21st, with the climb’s famous 21 hairpin bends, on the day of Tony’s funeral, with the Tour about to come to town. It was really special.”

Return to cycling

The attempt on Alpe d’Huez with all his old equipment (see sidebar) had been no long-term plan, says Timmis.

“It all just came together quite quickly, really. I turned 50 last year and I went to the Alps to ride for a few weeks and really enjoyed it, so it was only in spring last year that I started riding regularly again. Before that, I’d just go out once a week on my bike for an hour or so.

“I’ve had fits and starts of riding, but I’ve now got back into it properly, and I’m actually lighter now than I was as a pro. I just know so much more about nutrition now, and I’ve been getting out five or six times a week.

“I know that at some point I’m going to get slower, but for now I’m getting fitter, stronger, and lighter, so...” Timmis tails off. “I was a climber, but I was probably three or four kilos overweight compared to what I now know I should have been. Back then I’d race at 64kg; at the moment I’m 60kg, and feel strong and healthy.”

He says that he’s amazed at how fit and light he is, which has made riding Alpe d’Huez, almost, a pleasure.

“I lost weight gradually, not by starving myself, but by using modern science to lose weight, eating the right food at the right time,” he says. “Looking back, I can see that I ate the wrong food, albeit at the right time, which used to make me retain weight and affect me in certain ways. I’ve lost weight without really cutting back on food. And I now eat the right amount of protein; I didn’t use to eat enough. I think that’s why I kept weight on, and why a lot of people do. I’ve learned a lot, and have definitely turned myself from a carb-burning machine into a fat-burning machine!

“And I’m climbing a lot, lot better these days,” laughs Timmis. “Hindsight’s a wonderful thing, but if I could have the strength of a 23-year-old and the knowledge I now have about nutrition, it would be the perfect combination.”

To be climbing better, and weighing less, than you were when you were 23... most of us would take that, wouldn’t we?

“The strength of a 23-year-old and knowledge of a 50-something is a perfect combination”

“I’ll admit that I’ve become a bit obsessed with Alpe d’Huez,” Timmis says, explaining that he climbed it “five or six times” this summer. “It’s a special mountain. But maybe I’ll go back and do the Pyrenees next time.

Age no barrier

“Or Mont Ventoux,” he quickly adds, which the 1987 Tour also went up, conducted as a mountain time trial on stage 18, two days before Alpe d’Huez.

“I’m still competitive and I’ve entered this year’s Monsal Hill Climb [this weekend],” reveals Timmis, who is real proof that age need be no barrier at all to giving it some welly up a climb.

“I appreciate a lot more now what I did then [as a pro], and looking back I should have been training in the mountains, living in the mountains,” says Timmis. “It was Tony Capper’s dream to get us into the Tour de France, and to get us noticed, and that’s what we did.” ■



Three in a crowd: (from left) Elliott, Palov and Timmis

Getting the retro look

Adrian Timmis explains how he was able to get his 1987 look in 2015

“I’d sold my Peugeot bike from the ‘87 Tour in 1988 and I’d regretted it ever since,” says Timmis. “Then, a few years ago, someone contacted me on Facebook to say that they’d got it and that it was in their shed. They sent me some photos and I made them an offer, and bought it back. It had different transfers on it, but I could tell it was mine: I recognised the handlebar set-up and everything.

“I got it resprayed, but I couldn’t find any of the original decals anywhere. I eventually found a place in Crewe that made decals for retro bikes, and sent them loads of photos. Unfortunately, they couldn’t really make out a lot of the colours, but they managed to find a replica ANC Peugeot on eBay for 40 quid — one of the cheaper bikes — and so found the decals from that.

“It didn’t have its orange Benotto bar tape any more, either,” continues Timmis. “I didn’t think I’d ever find any more of the same tape, but eBay’s a great place; I found blue Benotto tape, and white Benotto tape, and then I found what was actually advertised as ‘ANC orange’ Benotto tape.” Job done — for the bike.

“I’d kept my jersey and I’d kept my race numbers, including my frame number, and I’d also kept my shoes, although I think they’d shrunk a bit. I also knew that I still had my blue Oakley Pilots [glasses], which I’d used at the Tour, at my mum’s somewhere, but I’d been looking for them for about four years,” Timmis laughs. “But then, just a week before I headed for the Alps, I found them in my mum’s garage.

“The cap was just a Peugeot one I got off eBay — we had proper ANC caps in 1987 — and I used a pair of shorts made by Assos [which made the ANC kit in 1987], so I didn’t have everything exactly the same. Someone pointed out that my socks were probably a bit longer than they were back then, too.”



The ANC-Halfords Tour class of 1987: where are they now?

Adrian Timmis owns and runs Cadence Sport, in Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, but where are Timmis's team-mates from that 1987 ANC-Halfords Tour squad?

Bernard Chesneau

"I've been in contact on Facebook," says Timmis of the Frenchman. "He works in PR on some of the bike races."



Malcolm Elliott

Elliott, who retired in 2011, has worked as a directeur sportif and done some TV punditry.



Guy Galopin

Galopin is directeur sportif at BigMat-Auber 93. He's the uncle of Lotto-Soudal pro Tony Galopin.



Graham Jones

Jones used to be the route director on the Tour of Britain. He now lives in Thailand and works in broadcast media.



Kvetoslav Palov

The Czech rider was one of ANC's four Tour finishers, along with Elliott, Timmis and Galopin. He lives in Australia.



Shane Sutton

Australian Sutton is British Cycling's technical director, effectively the boss of Great Britain's cycling team, succeeding Sir Dave Brailsford, who heads Team Sky.



Steve Swart

The Kiwi rode for the US Motorola squad alongside Lance Armstrong. He was one of the first riders to speak up about his former team-mate's performances.



Paul Watson

In the late 1980s he raced in the new US mountain bike scene. Now owns a hotel in his home town of Milton Keynes.



Timmis's bike takes pride of place in his shop



Classic Campag calipers



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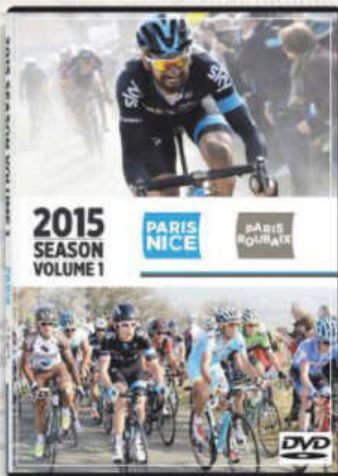
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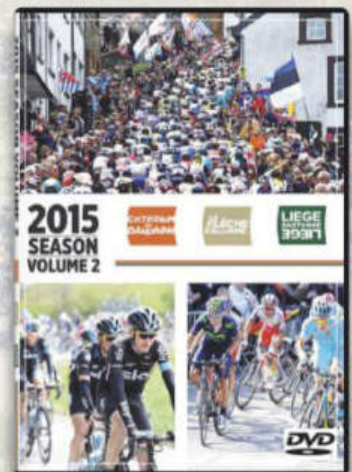
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Should you worry about chainline efficiency?

Does the angle of your chain really matter, or are modern bikes built well enough to ensure it never sits harmfully askew, asks *Matt Lamy*

First things first: it helps to understand what chainline is and why it's important. The term itself seems relatively self-explanatory: the line in which your chain runs in any given gear. However, there are two definitions of chainline.

Firstly there's the chainline dictated by component manufacturers. Imagine running a line down the centre of your bike from front to back, running through the tread of your front tyre, along the top tube and straight along the rear tyre. The first idea of chainline — we'll call it 'prescribed chainline' — is the ideal distance to position the chain from this central line through the bike.

This ideal distance is the middle point between the inner and outer chainrings

of the chainset, where the front derailleur will work most efficiently. To achieve this chainline, manufacturers specify bottom bracket sizes and spindle lengths to accompany their chainsets and front derailleurs. This chainline is effectively set and there's nothing to concern you while riding. It does, however, highlight one of the reasons why it's not ideal to mix and match components.

The second idea of chainline is the actual line or angle the chain takes between the chainset and the cassette. This is the chainline that matters more in practical terms. The perfect, i.e. most efficient, chainline runs dead straight from chainring to cassette. This is easy to achieve on a singlespeed or fixed-wheel bike, but not so easy with gears.



On a geared bike, the chain should run straight from the middle of the chainrings to the middle of your cassette. Running the chain at an angle can cause the chain to rub on the front derailleur, and reduce component life. That's why newcomers to cycling are told not to run extremes such as 'big-to-big' or 'small-to-small', i.e. 52x25 or 39x11.

Straight from the factory

That said, modern groupsets make it perfectly possible to achieve decent shifting across sprockets, as the

Yes



Andrew Lorenzi

B'Twin design manager

The chainline is very important for several reasons: more efficient

transmission; the less you bend the chain, the smaller the power loss; better function and less chance of the chain falling off the rings; less wear due to less friction; better function of the front derailleur; and quieter operation. Ideally, follow the supplier specs but you have to be particularly careful when manufacturers mix parts from different suppliers.

No



David Alexander

Specialized Bicycle Components

University; BodyGeometry FIT expert

By the time somebody buys one of our

bikes, they don't have to worry about chainline, because we've done all the worrying for them! We try to maintain our chainline so that it'll work with 11-speed cassettes and really short chainstays.

But we are given minimum chainline guidelines from component manufacturers, and that limits what we can do with bottom bracket size and chainstay length.



A straight-running chain is most efficient

flexibility in the chains can handle a bit of angle. This is handy because, even though middle-to-middle is ideal, it's simply not always possible.

"I suppose the big question with chainlines in the last couple of years has been with road bikes going to disc brakes," Hoy and Pinnacle designer James Olsen says.

"Shimano has stuck with the same chainline at the front, which is about 42 or 43mm, but all bikes with disc brakes now have 135mm back ends rather than 130mm. If Shimano's chainlines were right on a 130mm back end, the front chainline should move out 2.5 to 3mm to accommodate the 135mm rear.

"In a similar way, some riders say they're not riding anything bigger than an 11-23 or a 12-25 cassette. Then they'll spend most of their time pedalling round in the upper few cogs; the bike is essentially over-gearred for them.

"So when you're thinking about your ideal chainline, and how to make your chain work most efficiently, look at the gears you're using most and consider

how straight your chain is when you're using them. That's probably the easiest way to make it most efficient from a power output perspective: match your gearing and your cassette choice so that you're pedalling a straight chainline."

Avoid crossing your chain from big chainring to big sprocket. If on the big ring, use the 25 sprocket, then change on to the inner chainring and drop the chain down the cassette.

OUR TAKE

On a modern, complete-build bike from an established manufacturer, chainline shouldn't be an issue.

For performance junkies, there are ways to tweak it minutely so that it better fits your style of riding and preferred gear choices. For the rest of us, if your derailleurs are straight but your chain is jumping off chainrings or derailleur pulleys, or rattling, check your chainline.

HOT STUFF

TomTom Bandit Action Camera

Maybe best known for its sat-navs, TomTom has now released its first action camera, the impressively compact Bandit. It matches the GoPro Hero 4 with its 4k video, and betters it for value: prices start at under £300.

Contact: www.tomtom.com
£299.99 Test Report: October



Bontrager Velocis helmet

The Bontrager Velocis helmet seems to offer everything you'd want from a top-end helmet: a minimal dial adjustment system, internal channelling to improve ventilation, a slimline look to make it sit nice and close to your head, and a claimed weight of only a shade over 200g. Contact: www.bontrager.com £159.99 Test report: November



Speedplay Syzr pedals

With the cyclocross season under way, Speedplay has released its first off-road pedals. The Syzrs claim to offer the best power transfer available, plus a 'Target Acquisition System' to seamlessly engage. Contact: www.i-ride.co.uk
£189.99 Test Report: November



Garmin Virb XE camera £319.99

One of the most recent entries into the action cam market, the Garmin Virb XE is a step up from the standard Virb, recording in higher resolution (up to 1,440p) and with a higher frames per second (up to 240 fps). The Virb XE is ANT+ compatible, meaning you can pair it up with speed/heart rate/cadence sensors, with the data matched to the video, allowing you to produce some quite nice videos with your metrics displayed on screen. However, the main problem with the Virb XE is the battery life. With everything on (including WiFi) you'll be looking at about two hours' battery life — and that's without any filming! However, that can be extended if you only turn it on when you film.

Henry Robertshaw **153g**
www.madison.co.uk

8



Bontrager R3 TLR tubeless tyres £44.99

These tyres have converted me to tubeless. They came with Bontrager sealant, but work equally well with other sealants, such as Stan's. I tested the puncture protection by inserting multiple drawing pins and even nails into the tyre carcass. Astonishingly, the sealant was able to seal all the holes, rendering punctures highly unlikely. The 25mm width rolls very nicely too, especially when you drop the pressure to 60-70psi. The downside is that they can be difficult to fit, but the difficulty can vary depending upon the tyre/rim combination — Bontrager wheels were easier than the Hed Ardennes. I continued to ride these tyres after my 'nail test' and have had no punctures. Winter is coming and these tyres are ideal.

Oliver Bridgewood **281g (25mm)** www.bontrager.com



9

Giessegi Cauberg jacket £99

Product of the week

The Giessegi Cauberg is a lightweight water and wind resistant jacket/jersey in the mould of Castelli's Gabba. Its black colour scheme is relieved by a red waistband, the GSG chest logo and reflective banding on the tops of the three rear pockets. The Cauberg's insulation and windproofing proved just right for the rapidly returning autumn weather. Drizzle beaded off the fabric, and this continued to be the case even after multiple washes.

Moisture did not build up inside, even when riding uphill.

The Cauberg comes up quite large, but without a windflap, and I could fit a long-sleeved base layer beneath. Giessegi will customise the chest logo on orders of 10 or more, so you can show off your club's colours.

Paul Norman
325g (Size S)
www.dhwagencies.com



9



Castelli Velo Vest £60

Constructed using Castelli's ForceField micro ripstop, the Velo Vest claims to also prevent that waterlogged feeling post-downpour. Testing on a changeable day, it kept us feeling drier in the torso while keeping the chill off after a passing shower. The shoulders and back fit exceptionally well, thanks to the three-panelled design and stretchy mesh side panels, and the super-low tail does a great job at keeping road spray at bay. The front could be two or three inches shorter, as it has excess fabric folds in a riding position. It's small enough to pack into a jersey pocket, and has a reflective rear logo. *Hannah Bussey* **64g (small)**

www.saddleback.co.uk

8

Bellroy Elements Phone Pocket Plus £89

For anyone tired of protecting their phone with a sealable sandwich bag, this offering from Bellroy is a great choice and a wise investment, even if it is a little pricy. There's a main compartment inside suitable for a range of smartphones, plus several other pockets for cards, cash, keys and even a passport. Used on a rainy ride around Snowdonia and during some heavy showers in Surrey, this case kept its contents safe and dry. Its ergonomic shape lets it slip right into a

standard cycling jersey or jacket pocket and can be grabbed just as easily. All in all a great phone and accessories case for use on and off the bike. *Jack Elton-Walters* **102g**
www.bellroy.com



8

Oxford Products Protex bike cover £34.99

Oxford Products is well known for its line of motorbike covers and has used this expertise to create the Protex cover for your bicycle. This well-designed, soft cover is intended to protect your pride and joy's paintwork when stored indoors. The four-way stretch fabric fitted well over my bike and offers great flexibility for different sized frames. The material is breathable too, which prevents condensation building up to reduce the risk of rust. There is a separate chainset cover and guard, to stop the fabric being torn or covered in oil.

With many of us putting our summer steeds into hibernation soon, this offers ideal protection. *Oliver Bridgewood*

180g/m²

www.oxprod.com



8



Assos SS.LadyEllisse Jersey £115

Autumn may be upon us, and the SS.LadyEllisse is an ideal transition piece when teamed with arm-warmers and a windproof base layer. The brightly coloured jersey is ideal for shorter days with lower ambient light. Its multiple-panel and fabric construction gives it sufficient stretch. The four rear pockets, including a secure smaller one for valuables, are easily accessible and useable, with space for two spare tubes, levers, phone, arm-warmers and a gilet or rain cape. It's not cheap, but it's ideal if you want to stand out. *Hannah Bussey* **154g (small)**
www.assos.com

8

LONG TERM TEST

13 months later

Weldtite Dirt Wash chain cleaning machine £18.99

I'm not as religious as I should be about keeping my chain clean, but this little gadget certainly helps speed things up. It's pretty successful at getting the mess off, although it isn't fully effective for getting between the side plates. PN
www.weldtite.co.uk

8

Clean and tidy



Can't live without

Specialized Body Geometry Gel mitts £24.99

These are my favourite mitts for long rides — in fact I like them so much I've got two pairs. There's just the right amount of padding, including over the base of the hand where it rests on the bar tops. The synthetic leather palm wicks sweat well when it starts getting hot too. PN
www.specialized.com

Perfect padding and fine wicking quality too



GT Grade Carbon Ultegra £2599.99

Tested by: Paul Norman | Miles ridden: 233 |
Size tested: 55cm | Weight: 8.8kg/19.58lb

The GT Grade is one of the growing legion of adventure road and gravel bikes. These machines typically have clearance for

wide tyres and are equipped with disc brakes. Unlike cyclo-cross bikes, these have slack angles and a longer wheelbase for off-road stability and a wider gear range to allow you to make faster progress on the tarmac. GT has its roots in the Californian mountain bike scene and has put much of this experience into the Grade.

Frame

The Grade is available in an aluminium-framed version and this carbon model. The super-slim, bowed seatstays have a solid fibreglass core wrapped with carbon fibre. GT claims that the fibreglass contributes strength and rigidity while the carbon fibre adds vibration-damping.

The fork is thin to add a degree of flex over the bumps, and the head tube angle is a low 70.5° to aid stability. The wheelbase is long at 102.5cm, helping stability off-road. The Grade comes with a 15mm

front thru-axle for front-end rigidity, although the rear hub is a conventional 135mm quick-release.

There's plenty of clearance for wide tyres, helping prevent mud clogging in typical UK conditions. Cables are fully enclosed and routed externally under the down tube, as is the rear brake hose.

Specification

The Grade Carbon Ultegra is the top spec of the Grade range. It comes with a full Ultegra groupset with a 52/36

chainset, 11-30 cassette and hydraulic disc brakes. A Praxis Works bottom bracket adaptor is fitted to allow the Shimano chainset to sit in the BB30 shell.

Wheels have Stan's No Tubes Grail rims on DT Swiss 240 hubs. The choice of 28mm Continental Grand Sport Race tyres is somewhat surprising, being a treadless design, although on the extra-wide Grail rims, they come up at 31mm — not much less than many cyclo-cross tyres.

GT has equipped the Grade with its own flared bars, with

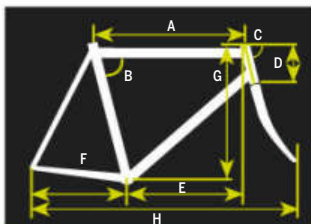


A quality package for those who venture off the beaten track

GT Grade Carbon Ultegra £2,599.99

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------|
| Frame | ■■■■■■■■■ | 9/10 |
| Specification | ■■■■■■■■■ | 10/10 |
| Ride | ■■■■■■■■■ | 9/10 |
| Value | ■■■■■■■■■ | 8/10 |

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Distributor | www.gt bicycles.com |
| Frame | GT EnduRoad carbon |
| Fork | GT Carbon, 11/8-11/4 tapered |
| Size range | 51, 53, 55, 56, 58, 60cm |
| Weight | (without pedals): 8.88kg/19.58lb |
| Groupset | Shimano Ultegra 11sp, Shimano R685 Ictech hydraulic disc brakes |
| Gear ratios | 11-30t, 52/36t |
| Wheels | Stan's No Tubes Grail rims, DT Swiss 240 hubs, 15mm thru axle F, QR rear |
| Tyres | Continental Grand Sport Race 28mm |
| Bar | GT DropTune with 14° flare, alloy |
| Stem | GT SL alloy |
| Seatpost | FSA SL-K Light 27.2mm, carbon |
| Saddle | Fizik Aliante Delta |



SIZE TESTED: M

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|--------|-----|-------|--------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| 55.0cm | 73" | 70.5° | 16.2cm | 37.3cm | 43cm | 57.8cm | 102.5cm |



Ultra-thin seatstays with solid fibreglass core



Stan's Grail rims support wider tyres

grass and chalk. A switch to cyclo-cross knobbly tyres sorted things out, which would be a wise choice for off-road riding in most UK conditions.

Braking was excellent and progressive. There was no fade even on long, steep off-road descents, although there was significant brake squeal; at least other riders knew I was coming.

Value

At £2,600, the Grade is not

a cheap proposition as a bike that will inevitably see some abuse. Then again, you are getting an innovative frame with excellent comfort and first-rate components. The Ultegra groupset behaved faultlessly throughout, and the control offered by the wide bars and the hydraulic brakes gave real confidence on descents both on and off road.

The finishing kit is also excellent and the wheelset is a highlight. The Stan's rims provide a stable base even for very wide tyres, but without adding too much weight or the feeling that you are being slowed down on the road. They can also be easily converted to run tubeless.

the 42cm width at the tops increasing to 50cm in the drops. There's a 27.2mm diameter FSA K-Force Light carbon seatpost and a Fizik Aliante Delta saddle.

Riding

On the road, the Grade is a stable and fast ride, with highish gear ratios meaning that good progress can be made; it's an enjoyable and comfortable bike for extended rides.

Turn off the road onto unsurfaced bridlepaths

and progress continues to be swift. The bike copes well with uneven and loose surfaces and the saddle is comfortable, being well-padded without feeling too spongy.

I was surprised how well the Continental tyres handled loose gravel, tree roots and muddy sections, with some wheel slip and sideways slide but nothing uncontrollable. Pushing my luck, I headed out after a night of rain to find that they reached their limit on off-camber turns on wet

Verdict

For anyone looking to spice up their road rides and turn off the beaten track, the Grade is an excellent choice. It's got the oomph and comfort to press on over the dodgiest of road surfaces, and the off-road capabilities to take you to new places and stretch your bike-handling skills.

It's worth noting that it comes with mudguard eyelets, so this is a bike that would serve equally

well as an all-year rugged commuter or a winter bike.

For

- Brilliant ride on all terrain
- Top spec for adventure road riding
- Great stability and control

Against

- Tyres not the best choice for UK conditions
- Not cheap for the abuse it will get off-road

9

Commuter backpacks

Chris Hovenden
shoulders the burden
of this week's bag test

What?

Commuter backpacks generally look like a normal rucksack but have a few cycling specific elements. For example, in addition to the standard two shoulder straps and one large compartment, they often have numerous pockets, good quality zips, are made from water resistant material, have reflective decals and should be more comfortable than a run-of-the-mill bag when cycling.

Why?

If you cycle to work, be it for a substantial distance or just a few miles, you will know the importance of a good quality commuter backpack. One of the biggest conundrums for a commuter is how to transport your laptop or notes, work equipment and change of clothes to the office. A good quality commuter rucksack will have sufficient space to fit the above items, be robust, water resistant, fit securely and most importantly be comfortable.

How?

Being a regular commuter I have ridden to work wearing each of the five bags on test on several occasions. Each has been thoroughly tested in weather ranging from warm sunny mornings to wet and windy evening commutes.

HOW WE SCORE

- 10 - Superb, best in its class and we couldn't fault it.
- 9 - Excellent, a slight change and it would be perfect
- 8 - Brilliant, we'd happily buy it
- 7 - Solid, but there's better out there
- 6 - Pretty good, but not quite hitting the mark
- 5 - Okay, nothing wrong with it, but nothing special
- 4 - A few niggles let this down
- 3 - Disappointing
- 2 - Poor, approach with caution
- 1 - Terrible, do not buy this product

Rapha Backpack £150

In addition to being very stylish, the Rapha Backpack has all the features you could want from a cycling specific rucksack and more. For example, it is made from water-resistant material; has reflective pin dots (on the straps, sides and bottom of the bag); two main compartments; sections for a laptop and tablet; is expandable; has contoured padding; and boasts multiple zip pockets. There are even clips to stop the straps blowing in the wind!

While these elaborate features add value, more importantly the core elements of the bag performed really well. It is durable, the zips are good quality and it's pretty comfortable. Also, the water resistant material was fine in light drizzle and in the event of heavy rain the zip-away bright pink rain cover was invaluable. It was only on the days that I needed to carry more than usual that I thought the bag could be a bit bigger and have slightly thicker padding on the shoulders. Overall, this is a quality bag that works well on the bike and looks good both on and off it.

Volume: 18 litres
www.rapha.cc

Weight
1.2
kg

8



Thule Pack 'n Pedal Commuter Backpack £124.99

If you can forgive the rather naff name, then the Thule Pack 'n Pedal Commuter Backpack is absolutely impossible to fault, and really is the perfect pack for trips to and from the office.

Most importantly, it has plenty of storage space. The main compartment has a 24-litre capacity which is more than enough for all your clothes and a sizeable lunchbox.

But it's not just a void in there, with separate compartments for your laptop and iPad, and plenty of padding for comfort on the bike.

What really makes the Thule bag stand out is all the extra features. Although the outer fabric is water-resistant, there's also a waterproof cover tucked away at the base of the bag which can be pulled over for when it chucks it down. You also get a hard pocket on one side to protect valuables, and a stowaway attachment system for your helmet when not riding. With every base covered, this is a truly excellent backpack.

Volume: 24 litres
www.madison.co.uk

Weight
504
grams

10



Evoc Commuter £109.95

Evoc's claims that the Commuter is water-resistant and completely weatherproof was certainly put to the test on some recent wet weather commutes. True to its word, Evoc's bag shrugged off the worst of the downpours and road spray, leaving everything inside dry. Being commuter-friendly, it has a number of different compartments for tablets, laptops, phones and even a soft pouch for glasses. However, it isn't the most spacious bag on test. The main limiting factor is how rigid the bag is — yes, it keeps its shape well, but if volume is a must, maybe look elsewhere.

While volume is limited, the upshot of this somewhat rigid design is how robust the bag is. An abrasion-resistant Cordura panel at the bottom does its job very well and the zips and toggles seem heavy-duty too — although the Evoc tarpaulin upper marks easily. Overall the bag is pretty comfortable to wear, with a reasonably padded back that features air channels to help limit heat build-up.

Weight
1.0
kg

7

Volume: 10 litres
www.silverfish-uk.com

Brooks Hackney Knapsack £130

Everywhere I went, people loved this bag, either complimenting it, or asking where I got it.

Inside the capacious 20-litre bag are various pockets that include a laptop compartment while pockets on the outside offer easy access for things such as keys and inner tubes.

Initially I was worried it would soak up water like a sponge. I was impressed to find that the Bluesign textile exhibited impressive beading and with a high level of waterproofing when riding in the wet.

Although the bag is well made and stood up to two months' commuting abuse without fault, there is no padding on the back or straps. This becomes an issue if you place heavy items in the bag and harder items have a tendency to poke you in the back, which isn't very comfortable. It may not be the most comfy, but the understated classic looks and quality of construction, certainly render it the coolest bag on test. It is available in five colours, so should suit most tastes.

Weight
940
grams

9

Volume: 20 litres
www.brooksengland.com

Giro Commuter Pack 2.0 £149.99

At 28 litres this is the biggest bag on test, making it perfect for when you really need to jam everything in. With its nifty roll-top design, you can make its profile more compact for those light load days, too. It has comfortable padded shoulder straps and a waist strap, with a clever design that keeps loose strap ends rolled up so they don't flap about.

The dome-shaped contours of the back padding do a good job of alleviating some of the inevitable sweating on longer rides or hot days.

The main compartment includes a useful, low-profile laptop sleeve. The outside pockets are a good size and the extra side storage is perfectly placed for convenient access.

The only niggle is that the bag could be improved if it featured an extra way of closing when the roll is fully extended, to make the most of all that extra space.

It is pushing the limit price-wise, but with so many well-executed design features, Giro has made a really fantastic commuter bag.

Weight
1.2
kg

8

Volume 28 litres
www.zyro.co.uk



FITNESS

How do I... Ride an undulating gradient?

Most climbs have changes in gradient, but what's the fastest way to get to the top?

Vicky Ware

Should you focus on going harder on the steep sections or the flatter sections of an undulating road? And would you even know if you were pushing too hard when the going gets steep? The 2014 national hill-climb champion Maryka Sennema shares her advice.

"Most people get more power out on the steeper bits and less on flatter bits, but to what extent you do that relates to the type of rider you are," she explains. "A punchy rider will probably do better with an uneven effort, putting out substantially more power on steeper bits and recovering on flatter bits."

Pacing is also key, Sennema explains: "I usually hold back in the first part and try to finish strong. My first hill-climb was a seven-minute climb where I set a five-minute power record — in the first five minutes! Ouch. I completely underestimated the influence of the start line adrenaline for that one." You can avoid this by setting off at a pace that feels too easy — it will

probably still be slightly too hard. Training with a power meter can help you find the best hill-climbing strategy. Whether that means easing off and getting some level of recovery on flatter bits then pushing on again when the going gets steep, or maintaining a steady power, depends on your strengths as a rider.

Sennema says: "Having a power meter definitely helps, as it can tell you if you're going out too hard or taking it too easy in the middle or on flatter sections — but only if you know yourself well enough to know what you're capable of!"

Pacing up a climb is an often neglected skill and many get it wrong. If you master it you'll certainly notice when riding in a group that your pacing tactics are working. Sennema has found this to be the case: "Most people tend to go out

too hard on climbs, and as such I'm often being forced to work very hard or even get dropped at the bottom. But if I can just hang on, I'm rewarded when they fade in the second half and I can steam past looking strong!"

Essential points

- Know your style — punchy or even effort?
- Pace yourself
- Know the climb
- Use a power meter
- Train specifically for the type of hill

If you're looking to do well in a hill-climb, get to know the gradient of the climb so you can train effectively. If you can't visit before race day, have a look at the Strava segment.

Ride with a power meter, even if this means renting one, to get an idea of how your power output varies with gradient. You might find a less punchy style gets you to the top faster.

As you approach a climb use your momentum from the descent or run-up leading into it and anticipate the need to change gears.

Don't set off too hard. It's really tempting to go too hard at the foot of a climb, especially if this is the steepest bit, and pay for it later. This is definitely not the fastest way to get to the top.

YOU
SAY

Spin on the way up, for the rest of the ride never stop pushing those pedals — don't roll down hills, stomp down them.

Firesheps

Work on your core and practise riding out of the saddle otherwise your chest and arms will fatigue faster than your legs!

Julian Huxtable



Adapt your training to the way you want to climb. Punchy efforts require the ability to recover quickly — do short intervals with short recoveries. If riding an even pace, train to keep power output stable.

Studies have shown that standing while climbing could increase the amount of power you can output for a given amount of lactate produced — but to do this effectively you need to train out of the saddle and work on your core strength.

Change gears to maintain an even cadence. Don't struggle to push too big a gear.

It's easy to get caught out attacking hard at the bottom of a climb only to find out it goes on for much longer than you expected.

James McClary

Depending on the group, choose your time to attack but always find a wheel.

Mark Van Bogerlijen

I prefer to stay controlled through the steep sections then attack harder where it is flatter, otherwise I blow up before the top.

Daniel Francis

Attack at the steep sections in the second half.

David Hernedez

Things to do this week

Eat garlic

Garlic, the stinky superfood, has been shown to produce improvements to everyday health, which will mean your physical condition on the bike can only benefit as well. As the colder weather starts to roll in, everyday infections start to rise in frequency. Garlic is full of antioxidants that can help fight common illnesses as well as containing compounds that can help prevent bigger health problems such as high blood pressure and cancer. To maximise these health benefits try to consume garlic raw by either chopping it into thin slices or in paste form.

Try Stealth Super Hydration Drink Mix

Stealth is the official nutrition supplier to Tinkoff-Saxo, home of new world champion Peter Sagan. Available in four flavours — lemon and lime, blackcurrant and elderflower, mango and passion fruit, and lemon tea — adding a single sachet to 500ml of water will replenish electrolytes that are lost on the bike. Taking the recommended four sachets per hour will also mean you maintain your carbohydrate levels to stay energised for the entirety of your ride. £15.99 for 20 sachets

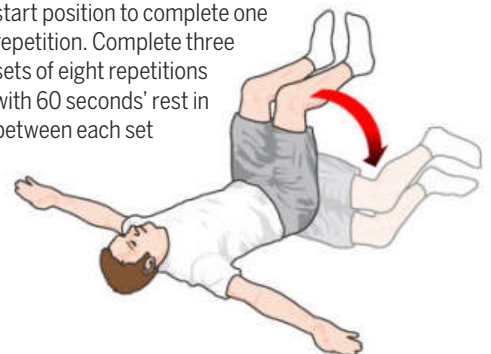
www.secret-training.cc



Do windscreen wipers

The importance of having a strong core when cycling cannot be underestimated and this exercise is an excellent way to improve your core stability on the bike. Lie on your back with your arms outstretched in the crucifix position.

Bend your legs to a 90° angle and raise them off the floor. Making sure you keep both shoulders in contact with the floor, rotate your knees towards one side so your legs are hovering just above the floor. Hold this position for a moment before steadily returning to the start position, repeat this movement on the opposite side. Return the legs back to the start position to complete one repetition. Complete three sets of eight repetitions with 60 seconds' rest in between each set





Letting lactic acid off the hook

Lactate, a compound that accumulates during intense exercise, has for too long been unfairly blamed for pain and fatigue. Here, *David Bradford* mounts a multi-pronged defence of the maligned metabolite

David Bradford

Everyone has heard of lactate — or lactic acid — and for most of us it conjures up the special type of discomfort brought on by pedalling harder than our legs seem willing to tolerate. If I had a polka-dot jersey for every hill-beaten cyclist I've overheard wheezing on about "lactic burn", I'd need a bigger spotted jersey drawer than Federico Bahamontes. Blaming lactate in this way is almost entirely unjustified, as this feature will explain, yet the misconception persists — and not only among amateurs.

"I heard a British pro rider, a former national champion, interviewed after a multi-lap race that featured a big hill," recalls physiologist Jamie Pringle. "He said that every time he rode up the hill he was *seriously lactating*."

Never could you so accurately accuse someone of milking it! Though that anecdote is funny, it reflects a serious misunderstanding: we're wrongly blaming an innocent metabolite for our pained, panicked urges to stop and give up. Lactate must be acquitted forthwith; it's time to face the truth, deal with it and, where possible, keep pedalling.

Lactate doesn't cause pain and fatigue during exercise

This is the trickiest part of lactate's acquittal, not because it's guilty but because pain and fatigue are hugely complex areas — and circumstantial evidence has placed lactate so firmly in the frame for so long that we, as cyclist jurors, have become biased. Let us call upon an expert witness, lactate specialist and orthopaedic cancer surgeon Matthew Goodwin of the University of Utah, who was a protégé of the lactate guru L. Bruce Gladden, who built on the work of the god of lactate research George Brooks.

"Lactate would be a long way down my list of factors that cause fatigue," says Goodwin. "There is very little evidence

for such an association, despite it being commonly assumed."

The assumption arises from the belief that lactate contributes to rising levels of acidity within exercising muscle, which is known as acidosis and is caused by an increased concentration of hydrogen ions. Though it is true that the formation of lactate may contribute to a fall in pH, the extent to which rising acidity causes fatigue is far less clear-cut.

"It is super-complicated," admits Goodwin. "Much of the early research hinting that pH was a causative factor in fatigue was fatally undermined as soon as they corrected for temperature and ran the tests at body temperature."

Pringle agrees, and provides his own explanation for the stubborn persistence of lactate's undeserved reputation as a cause of fatigue.

"It's one of the easier metabolites to measure; physiologists and sports scientists have been measuring it routinely since the Sixties. Inorganic phosphate, potassium and other chemicals in the blood and muscle which are related to fatigue — in some cases, far more strongly — are really hard to measure, so people simply don't."

He also points out that many racing cyclists take sodium bicarbonate before events, which makes the blood more alkaline, allowing the muscle to release more lactate to the blood, and in fact allows a greater peak lactate to be achieved; if more lactate were harmful to performance, this would be counter-productive.

"It's mostly used in sprinting, but I've seen successful use of sodium bicarbonate in long-distance time triallists racing over an hour, particularly on challenging courses."

Further mitigating evidence for lactate has been accrued by simply injecting it

into people and seeing what happens. "If you take a resting human and start giving them lactate at 2mmol or 4mmol, it's not as though they all of a sudden start burning or feeling fatigued. They feel fine," says Goodwin.

Lactate is a fuel, not a waste product

The most misguided view of lactate is that it is little more than a waste product that accumulates during hard exercise, causing pain and misery like a corrosive toxin. This could not be further from the truth, as Goodwin explains:

"The reality is that lactate itself is half a glucose molecule; it's a three-carbon molecule that's readily taken up by pretty much every cell in the body and used as a fuel. That's one important reason why it just doesn't fit as an agent that would cause fatigue."

During exercise, lactate is produced during glycolysis — a process by which glucose is broken down to produce energy (more on this later) — and it was traditionally thought that all of the resultant lactate was transported in the blood to the liver, to be converted back to glucose. Science has since shown that lactate is far more useful and versatile than that.

"Lactate is a fuel. With regard to causing fatigue, it's no longer a key suspect"

"We now know that lactate has many other fates," says Goodwin. "In fact, lactate serves as a very important fuel for many if not most tissues of the body, something that is now well known in exercise physiology circles and is slowly spreading to the rest of medicine and the public."

That's right, lactate research is one area in which exercise science is leading the way, rather than, as is more usually the case, playing catch-up. (In fact, Goodwin's current work under Dr Kevin Jones at the University of Utah is focused on exploring the role lactate plays in fuelling cancer.)

"Lactate produced by exercising muscle is taken up and used as a fuel by both local and distant tissues; specifically, tissues like the heart, other skeletal muscles and even the brain."

Thus, the lactate your hard pedalling produces and pushes out of cells into your bloodstream does not uselessly accumulate and cause your muscles to

burn; on the contrary, it's shuttled around your body to fuel other tissues, allowing you to power on through *despite* feeling as though your physical reserves are running low. Such is the potency of lactate that it is believed to be responsible for maintaining consciousness — and even life — in people whose glucose levels fall perilously low.

"We recently published a case report with Dr Nijsten from the Netherlands, who had a patient walk into the emergency room with a blood glucose level of around 13mg/dL, which usually causes coma," says Goodwin. Normal blood glucose is 70-100mg/dL, while normal resting lactate is around 1-2mmol/L.

"How was this person still able to walk and talk? It caused a lot of head-scratching. Long story short, this patient's lactate was measured at 25mmol/L, and when we reviewed the case multiple times it appeared that utilising lactate was the way this guy lived."

Lack of oxygen is not the principal cause of lactate accumulation

Lactate is produced during anaerobic glycolysis — when glucose is broken down, without oxygen, to form pyruvate and then energy. However, contrary to another common misconception, this does not mean that lactate is only produced when oxygen supplies are running critically low.

"Early, highly influential experiments in this area noted that lactate accumulates if oxygen is lacking — but this is often the exception rather than the rule in the human body," explains Goodwin. "The real revolutionary in this story is probably not me or Brooks or Gladden, but Wendell Stainsby, a Florida professor who in the late-Sixties showed that the contracting, lactate-releasing dog muscle was not hypoxic [lacking oxygen]. This paved the way for a new way of thinking about lactate."

Of course, low oxygen does necessitate the production of lactate — because demand for energy exceeds the supply capacity of aerobic respiration (breaking down glucose with oxygen). But this is not the principal reason why lactate figures in such an important way during exercise.

"When you look at exercising humans, the increase in lactate is multi-factorial," says Goodwin, "but lack of oxygen would be low on the list as a causative agent."

In Goodwin's view, more influential



The lactate myth is on its last legs

Explainer: lactate-related jargon

Lactate threshold 1 (AKA: LT1)

This is the point at which blood lactate first begins to rise — slowly and by a small degree — as the workload increases and notable changes occur in muscle-fibre types being recruited. Depending on the individual's fitness, this threshold coincides with 50-70 per cent of maximal aerobic capacity (i.e. fairly easy pace). When exercising at just above this threshold, lactate concentration in the blood rises by a small amount, from around 1mmol/L to around 2mmol/L and thereafter remains steady.

In practice... This is a suitable pace for

general, moderate-effort training rides of up to around three hours in duration. Recovery and longer rides should be conducted at below this first lactate threshold.

Lactate turn-point (AKA: lactate threshold 2 or LT2, functional threshold, maximal lactate steady or MLSS, onset or blood lactate accumulation or OBLA)

This is the critical threshold; above this blood lactate level, which falls anywhere between 2-6mmol/L depending on the individual. Although onset of blood lactate accumulation (OBLA) was originally defined

than low oxygen in explaining increased lactate levels during exercise are:

1. the increased demand for energy as workload increases; 2. the surge in power-boosting hormones that restrict lactate removal by constricting blood vessels; and 3. the increased recruitment of more fast-twitch muscle fibres which by their very nature rely more on lactate-producing energy generation.

“Low oxygen may come in at fourth on the list, if at all,” Goodwin says.

Lactate does not cause post-exercise muscle soreness

This is perhaps the most prevalent myth but also the easiest to dispel. Far too many cyclists have been misinformed into believing that lactate ‘pools’ in the muscles after a hard ride, leading to soreness and stiffness the next day. Furthermore, they believe that the solution is to use special warm-down and recovery techniques to ‘flush out’ lactate from their muscles. These people are wrong, worrying unduly and wasting their time.

“It is true that blood lactate peaks around five minutes after a 60-90-second bout of all-out effort,” says Goodwin, “but it naturally subsides to normal levels within two hours, regardless of whether you perform a thorough low-intensity cool-down or simply sit and relax.”

Given that muscle soreness usually occurs 24-48 hours after hard exercise, it makes no sense to blame lactate.

The second prong of lactate’s defence in response to this charge is that the types of exercise most liable to result in soreness are short-duration activities that do not

bring about an especially big rise in lactate levels, for example, eccentric contractions in weightlifting. It’s believed that this type of soreness is more likely caused by micro-damage to muscle tissue and the subsequent repair process.

“Active cool-down may have other benefits,” Goodwin concludes, “but you can rest assured that lactate will quite swiftly return to normal levels whether you follow a post-exercise protocol or simply sit down and relax.”

You don’t need to test your lactate level to train effectively

Despite all the myths, using lactate as a metric in training is still effective and widely used by top endurance coaches. Even so, there are limitations in testing blood lactate as a means of establishing precise training intensities.

“When you measure lactate with a finger-prick test, that measurement is probably two minutes late, i.e. after what has happened in the muscle,” explains Pringle. “We can only measure it in the muscle currently by using an interstitial sensor, but you’re not going to do that routinely. Testing the blood is actually quite a blunt measurement. What’s going on in the muscle is far more volatile and influenced by many different factors.”

The USA swimming team actually stopped measuring lactate clearance at competitions after they consulted with Goodwin’s old mentor L. Bruce Gladden.

“He [Gladden] told me he wasn’t sure what he had said but that soon after his conversation with them, they did away with the testing,” Goodwin explains.

level of effort; too much time at lactate threshold may lead to overtraining.

Lactate clearance (AKA: lactate shuttle)

As you get fitter — partly by training at lactate turn-point — your body becomes more efficient at transporting and recycling lactate. “Clearing the metabolic backlog in the muscle allows the metabolism upstream to run a little bit faster,” says Pringle. “If you can get more lactate into the blood, you can keep that pathway running faster for longer, increasing the efficiency with which lactate is used readily as a fuel in other organs and muscle tissue, and recycled back to glucose in the liver.”

Ultimate lactate threshold session

Physiologist and coach Jamie Pringle describes his favourite lactate turn-point workout

“My favourite session for working on lactate turn-point has a 1:2 work-to-recovery ratio: you do 20secs at just above lactate turn-point, then 40secs at just below. You do this continuously for 20mins — going just above turn-point and just below, in a controlled, precise, and hopefully not too fatiguing way.”

USA Swimming’s report on its decision concludes: “Because there is no relationship between blood lactate clearance and fatigue, none of the testing information helped us determine if an athlete was recovered, or not.”

To reiterate, training at lactate turn-point is undoubtedly effective and is a vitally important component for endurance athletes (see boxouts); it’s just that establishing the exact blood concentration figure is not straightforward, as Goodwin explains.

“Everyone’s lactate concentration at lactate turn-point is a little bit different. For some people, that value is 2mmol/L, while for others it’s as high as 4.5-6mmol/L. So you can’t use one number, and that complicates things.”

Goodwin underscores that the term ‘lactate threshold’ refers to the oxygen consumption or the work rate, not the actual lactate concentration.

Using blood lactate as a metric requires continual, personalised monitoring, and is therefore impractical for most non-professional cyclists.

“You need to plot a curve for each athlete to figure out what the lactate concentration is at turn-point,” says Goodwin, “and the problem with that is they are probably constantly improving throughout the year. It’s not straightforward to use as a training tool, and there are other ways to do it.”

“When coaching, I would always judge it on levels of intensity, and I feel like people are pretty good at guesstimating the level of effort that coincides with their lactate turn-point.” ■

as 4mmol/L, research has since shown that the actual onset point varies widely between individuals. Above turn-point, the concentration of lactate increases suddenly and exponentially; power may remain steady for a while but lactate will continue to rise.

Lactate turn-point intensity is the exertion level an athlete is able to sustain for around one hour. It coincides with 80-90 per cent of maximal aerobic capacity, and is characterised by Pringle as “comfortably hard but hardly comfortable”.

In practice... Training at this intensity is one of the most effective ways to raise your lactate turn-point and thus increase the speed at which you’re able to contest events lasting 30-60mins. However, this is a taxing

Matt Cronshaw's Diet in a day

Team Madison-Genesis | Age 26 | From Lancaster



Paul Knott

Over the past few seasons, Lancastrian Matt Cronshaw has raced with a number of

different Pro Continental British teams. He is just coming towards the end of his first season with Madison-Genesis, a period in which he was a crucial

part of their Tour Series-winning team. He finished sixth in the Aberystwyth round, and enjoyed further success last month when he took the win at the Leicester

Castle Classic. Cronshaw outlined to *Cycling Weekly* what he would eat throughout the day leading up to an evening criterium race.

Breakfast

I like to keep it light until lunch. Last year I tried to do a pre-breakfast ride but it ended up pushing my breakfast, a quite big meal, back until 12 o'clock. I was also spending quite a bit of time at home last year, so it was a bit easier to do, but this year I've been staying in hotels more often, so it is not as easy. Now I just have a small bowl of porridge for breakfast — nothing too crazy.

CW says:

The benefits of porridge don't need to be mentioned again. This must-have cyclist's breakfast doesn't look like it will go out of fashion any time soon. The choice is what to put on top of your morning meal: chia seeds, banana, blueberries... the possibilities go on and on.

345
kcalories
57g
carbohydrates
13g
protein
0g
fat



On the bike/after the ride

During my training rides, I only have an SiS electrolyte drink, as I don't tend to eat gels in training. When I get back from a ride, I usually just have a banana before I shower and rest up.

CW says:

As Cronshaw was in a heavy batch of criterium racing at this point, consuming gels isn't as important as it would be for the long, consistent intensity efforts required for long stage races. However, training the body for the dietary needs it goes through during a race is very important. Overloading the body with gels on race day may cause digestion problems, particularly if you're not used to them, which can severely harm performance. Depending on the intensity of Cronshaw's training session and its duration, he may benefit from a recovery drink or milk with banana to ensure that he is topping up protein as well as carbs.

397
kcalories
102g
carbohydrates
1g
protein
0g
fat



Snacks

Usually the rule of thumb is to eat three hours before a race, but with criteriums being so intense from the gun, I like to rule out any chance of there being any undigested food in my system. About three o'clock I'll have a big bowl of plain rice with some tuna. It is quite simple but I have quite a big portion to make sure I get through to seven o'clock without eating much else. An hour and a half before the race, I have an SiS Go gel before having another two, 45 and 15 minutes before the race.

CW says:

Tuna is an excellent source of protein, sometimes overlooked in favour of chicken or steak. Tuna should be the go-to food if you are looking to cut down your calorie intake while maintaining your body's satiety. Topping up your carbohydrate levels with a large portion of plain rice is, despite being rather dull, the ideal pre-race meal.



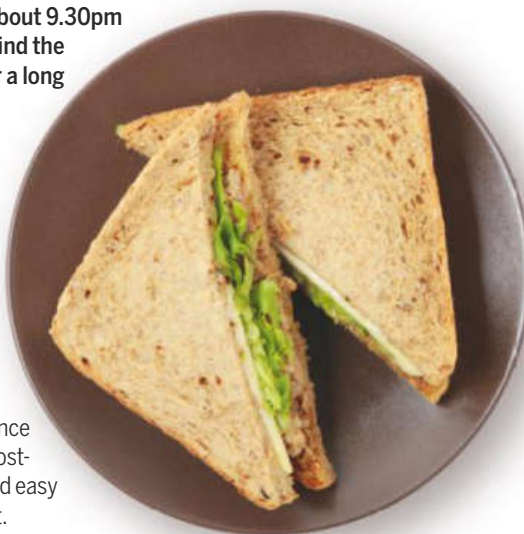
1,014
kcalories
162g
carbohydrates
72g
protein
20g
fat

Dinner

After the race we had the podium and stuff, so it wasn't until about 9.30pm that I had a chicken and cheese sandwich from Sainsbury's. I find the more sprint efforts I do, the less hungry I am afterwards. After a long steady ride, I'm absolutely starving, having spent all that time chewing through calories — but after a criterium I find I don't want to eat at all. I often carry a gel during the criteriums to have halfway through, to give me a boost, but I don't usually have a chance to eat it. In fact, I can't remember the last time I had the time to take one in a criterium.

CW says:

The unfortunate consequence of racing evening criteriums and the logistics of finishing late at night means that sometimes there can be a lack of nutritious food options available to the team. Its high fat to carbohydrate and protein ratio outweighs the convenience of buying a late-night sandwich, when compared to a traditional post-training evening meal. Again, a recovery drink would be a quick and easy way to get some fuel in after the event and would be easy to digest.



522
kcalories
50.8g
carbohydrates
32.4g
protein
19.6g
fat

Drinks

Throughout the day, I drink sparkling water and coffee — just what I feel like having. Other than that, it comes back to keeping stuff light on my stomach and not wanting too much sugar, as I don't want to spike my insulin levels. Before the race, I have a bottle of water with SiS Go Electrolytes; the Go packet recommends three an hour, but I can't digest them that quickly. However, I do tend to have more gels than solid food in a long race.

CW says:

As Cronshaw says, following the recommended usage of energy products isn't as important as you may think. Remember, a recommendation is just that; you don't have to follow this measurement to the letter. What works best for you may not apply to others, so experiment in your training to ascertain your optimal nutrition strategy. Sparkling water has no health advantages over still water, but if you fancy some fizz and get bored of tap water, go ahead.



236
kcalories
37.8g
carbohydrates
1.2g
protein
5.1g
fat

DAILY INTAKE

2,514
kcalories
409.6g
carbohydrates
119.6g
protein
48.7g
fat

Put the recovery cold bath on ice

New research says icy water suppresses muscle growth

Andrew Hamilton

In recent years, a recovery technique called 'cold water immersion' has become popular among some elite athletes. The theory is that by immersing the body in very cold water after training, recovery can be accelerated, shortening recovery times and allowing you to train or compete again sooner.

However, if the thought of dunking yourself in a bath of ice-cold water is distinctly unappealing, take heart because a new study suggests that far from improving recovery, it might actually harm it.

In the study, Australian researchers looked at different recovery strategies over a 12-week period of strength training. To do this, they took a group of physically fit young men and divided them into two post-training recovery groups. After each training

session, one group sat for 10 minutes in a bath containing very chilly (10°C) water while the other group performed a rather more agreeable 10-minute active warm-down by pedalling on an exercise bike.

After 12 weeks of training, the muscle strength and mass gains were significantly greater in the active warm-down group than in the cold bath group. Subsequent testing on muscle samples taken from subjects after both types of recovery revealed that the cold water immersion suppressed key biochemical pathways essential for muscle adaptation. This in turn reduced the ability of the muscles to make long-term strength and mass gains and the researchers concluded that athletes using strength training to either improve performance or recover from injury should refrain from cold water immersion.



Cold shoulder: chilly water may hamper recovery

Time taken: 25 mins

Great for...
starting the day

Blueberry & beetroot porridge with chopped walnuts

Start the day right with this colourful breakfast of blueberry and beetroot porridge, packed full of antioxidants and guaranteed to power you through the day. A twist to liven up your traditional cyclist breakfast.





INGREDIENTS:

(makes 4-6 servings):

- 470ml water
- 100g rolled oats
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon (plus more for serving)
- 200g blueberries, fresh or frozen
- 3-4 tbsp maple syrup (to taste)
- Pinch salt
- 2 large ready cooked beetroots, chopped
- Yogurt and chopped walnuts to serve

METHOD:

- 1) Bring the water to the boil in a medium-sized saucepan and tip in the rolled oats and cinnamon.
- 2) Reduce heat and simmer 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until all water is absorbed.
- 3) While the oats are cooking, in a separate pan, combine the blueberries, maple syrup and a pinch of salt. Cover the pan and place on a medium heat.
- 4) Bring this mixture to the boil then uncover and allow blueberries to cook gently until soft and the juice around the blueberries is thick (about 10 minutes).
- 5) Add the chopped beetroot and continue cooking just until beetroot is hot. Add oatmeal and blueberry-beet sauce to bowls. Serve with plain yogurt and chopped walnuts.

NUTRITION PER SERVING:

182.5
calories
29g
carbohydrates
5.75g
protein
3.75g
fat

TAKE HOME TRAINING SESSION

Train by leg speed

Working on leg speed is great for recovery work but it will also optimise your performance, too. Wattbike's Eddie Fletcher shows you how...

I am a fan of a high leg speed at low gear — by which I mean low for you. The best way to set this in context is to use your training zones. Chose a gear that you can easily pedal in for recovery. Getting this right gives you the best chance of optimising your physiology and performance.

maintain the required cadence for every two-minute segment.

In any given training zone you can utilise low gears to maintain the optimum cadence. If you can maintain a Zone 4 effort at 95-100rpm, you'll be able to sustain this cadence at any intensity.

Time taken:
20 mins

Leg speed drills are great as recovery rides and for Zone 1 work. Working up in two-minute intervals from 90rpm through to 110/115rpm and then reversing back down to 90rpm can yield immediate improvements. To make it into a Zone 2 workout, move up through the gears by one or two sprockets while still being able to

| Time (minutes) | Cadence (RPM) | Zone |
|----------------|---------------|------|
| 0-2 | 90 | z1 |
| 2-4 | 95 | z1 |
| 4-6 | 100 | z1 |
| 6-8 | 105 | z1 |
| 8-10 | 110 | z1 |
| 10-12 | 115 | z1 |
| 12-14 | 110 | z1 |
| 14-16 | 105 | z1 |
| 16-18 | 100 | z1 |
| 18-20 | 95 | z1 |

| Effort | You can | It feels like you're... | Use it for... | % Max heart rate | % FT power |
|------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Easy Zone 1 | Chat freely | Warming up | Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery | 60-65% | 56-75% |
| Steady Zone 2 | Speak one sentence at a time | Riding along in the bunch on the flat | Long rides | 65-75% | 76-90% |
| Brisk Zone 3 | Speak a few words at a time | Breathing deeply and working hard | Long efforts of 10 to 20min | 75-82% | 91-105% |
| Hard Zone 4 | Say only one word at a time | Really attacking (perhaps on a climb) | Efforts lasting 2-8min | 82-89% | 106-120% |
| Very hard Zone 5 | G grunt and gasp | Sprinting | Efforts lasting less than 2min | 89%-MHR | 121%+ |

Etape Loch Ness

CW
Difficulty
rating:
5/10

Next
year's
event:
April 24

66
miles

900
metres
ascent

A Highland fling of a ride with only one monster climb to slay

Inverness is a charming Highland city that is the northern gateway to the mystical Loch Ness. On the day of the Etape Loch Ness, just after sunrise with roads closed to traffic, a beautiful eerie stillness hangs in the early spring morning. On this day the roads around the loch belong to cyclists.

The route threads by the River Ness on the undulating A82, moving south, anti-clockwise, to take on a full circumnavigation of the legendary loch. The short and steady gradients ▶

Where is it?

Inverness is a city in the north-east of Scotland, situated beyond the Cairngorm National Park, near the western end of the Moray Firth. The city lies on the River Ness with an impressive castle sitting on its bank. This river flows into the legendary loch which attracts thousands of tourists every year.

Why ride it?

This is not a tough course and is ideal to test your fitness as we head out of winter. The route takes a full circumnavigation of Loch Ness following, where possible, the roads that hug the shoreline. You'll pass over the Caledonian Canal and take on the five-mile climb to the Glendoe summit.

History

The brainchild of Caledonian Concepts, which also organises marathons and duathlons. The organisation of this event is top notch. In its first year in 2014 the 1,250 entries that were available sold out in less than five hours. This year, its second, 3,300 riders took part.



How to enter

Go to www.etapelochness.com to register your interest. Early bird entry opens October 26 and the event always sells out quickly.

HQ details

The ride starts and finishes from the riverside in Inverness (IV3 5SA). You'll need to be there the day before the ride to pick up your ride number. There are flights from all major UK airports to Inverness. The closest train station is Inverness.

Where to stay

The Glen Mhor Hotel has a riverside location sitting opposite the start point. There is also Park Guest House and Ardross and Glencairn, both under a mile from the start. There is a Premier Inn just half a mile away.

Where to eat

Overlooking Inverness Castle, Riva is an Italian restaurant perfect for carb loading. The Mustard Seed is a great local hotspot with a small menu of locally sourced dishes. Try River House and Aspendos for Mediterranean and Turkish cuisine.

Local bike shop

There'll be a mechanic at registration on the Saturday but if you need to make any equipment purchases try Bikes of Inverness on Grant Street.



help break up groups of riders, but you will still need to pay attention and utilise the two-lane closure as the small start groups catch each other up and begin to play cat and mouse. The stretch of tarmac on the western shore is the foremost from which to see the dark and forbidding waters of Loch Ness, the UK's largest body of water.

It's at the village of Lochend you catch your first glimpse of the loch. The craggy terrain rises steeply from the banks creating a fortress that stretches up to brush low-lying clouds.

Whether or not you choose to believe the legend of Nessie we're sure, as it did with us, that each ripple on the water will pull your gaze. But that's not the only reason to keep looking up from the stem. The route is dotted with impressive historical landmarks. As you pass through the village of Drumnadrochit the ruins of Urquhart Castle come into view, a 16th century stronghold that teeters on the edge of the loch.

At Fort Augustus you'll cross the 60-mile-long Caledonian Canal, which connects eastern and western Scotland from Inverness to Corpach, near Fort William.

Leaving the A82 to cross over to the east bank, it's time to dig in and do battle on the event's timed hill climb, Glendoe summit. There is no disputing where this monster lies. Before you even notice the timing mat, you'll see the road

rising sharply at 12 per cent as it disappears up and around the curve of the mountain. With virtually no climbing in your legs up to this point there is no excuse not to go full tilt.

While spring has touched most of the UK by late April, the Highlands is still on first name terms with the lingering presence of winter. Snow lies in patches and the abundant brown heather creates a velvet patchwork on the mountainside.

As you near the summit keep an ear out for the traditional hum of bagpipes. A perfectly placed bagpiper will be filling the air with such tunes as 'Scotland the Brave' — an appropriate accompaniment as you celebrate the end of your five-mile battle.

Enjoy the long and straight descent and tuck in for some eye-wateringly good speeds to pop up on your Garmin display.

There are a couple of sharp but short rises to tackle over on the loch's east bank, before the home straight, as you navigate the lochside towns of Foyers and Dores on a network of small lanes flanked by farmland.

It's at Dores that the road closure narrows to one lane. Be patient as, while you still keep moving, it can become quite congested in the last few miles. But soak up the atmosphere as locals cheer you in to finish in the shadow of Inverness Castle.

ORGANISER'S TARGET TIMES

| Route | Award | Distance (miles) | Ave speed (mph) | Time |
|-------|--------|------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Epic | Bronze | 66 | 12mph | 5hr 30min |
| Epic | Silver | 66 | 15mph | 4hr 24min |
| Epic | Gold | 66 | 19mph | 3hr 27min |

The challenges

1 Climb after Drumnadrochit A82

This small rise has a nice gradient of six per cent and curves beautifully around the loch. It's your first test of the day and a great warm-up.

2 B852 towards Foyers

A short but sharp ascent through the wooded banks on the east side of the loch. If you've gone all out on the Glendoe summit you could be suffering, but at less than a mile long we advise you to dig in and power on.

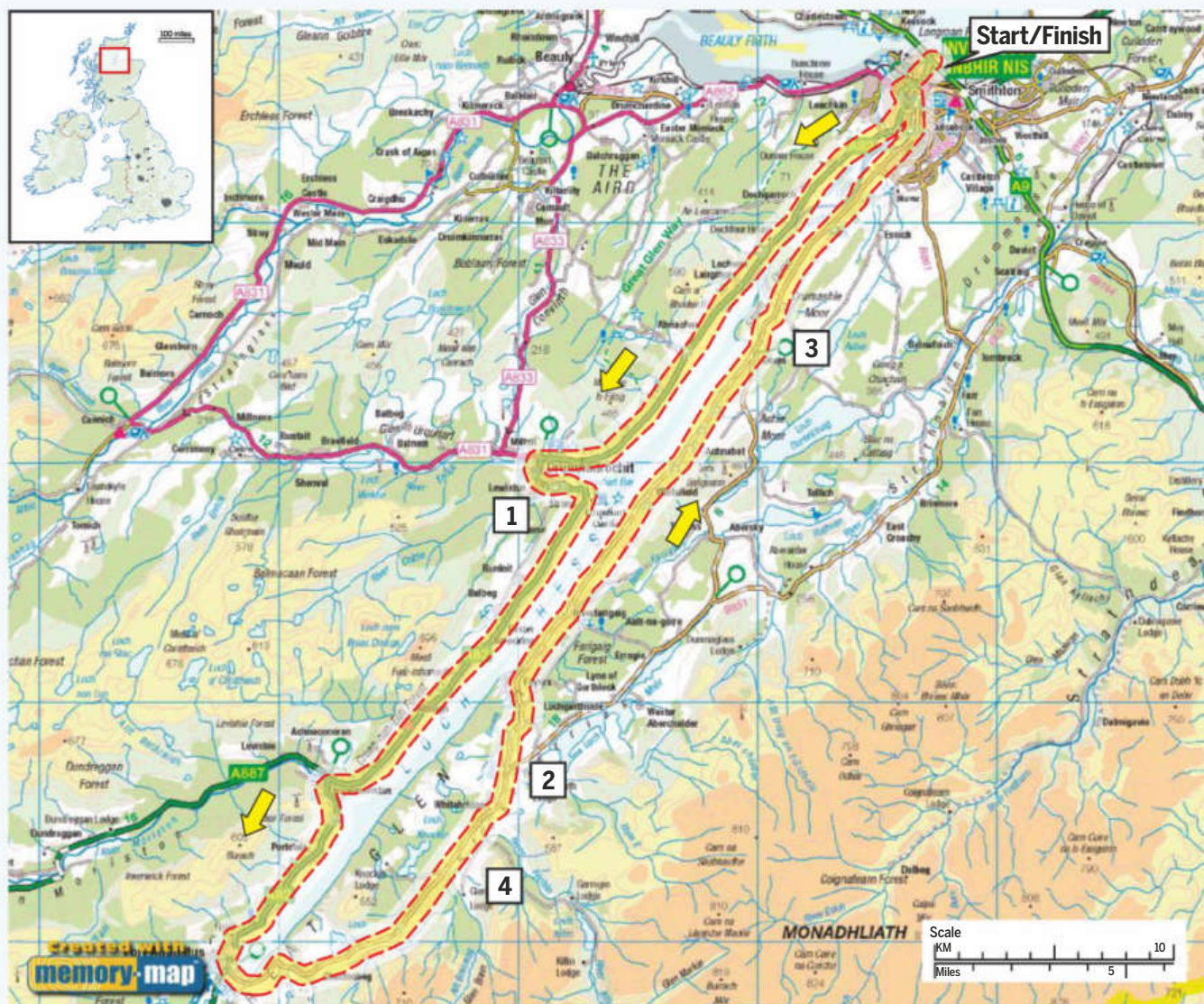
3 B862 after Dores

Use the undulations on the home stretch to propel you over this last uphill before the home straight. It's not too steep so a good place to get ahead of the weaker climbers on this section of single lane road closure.

NAIL IT

4 Glendoe summit

At the 34-mile mark you'll hit the timing mat of the event's timed hill-climb. It rises over 280m (1,246ft) and is 4.8 miles long. On the route profile it resembles the humps of Nessie himself, with three obvious sections. The first is the toughest as it's the longest (over a mile) and sustains 12 per cent, but a nice short downhill section will freshen the legs before climbing once more through the towering conifers and bright ferns. Prepare yourself as you pass Loch Tarff on a flat section. Then it's the final push to the summit and with 15 per cent flashing up on our Garmin it could catch you unawares if you're ambling along in the big chainring. Watch out for the inevitable walkers.



Event website www.etapelochness.com

Saltford & Keynsham Cycling Club

Jocelyn Mack visits a friendly force in south-western cycling

On a quiet back street in the town of Keynsham in Somerset, 83 members of the SAS gather together. It's 6.50am and most of the town's inhabitants are still tucked up in their beds as the sun just peeks over the horizon. The group is hunched together under the glow of a lone street light, the red stripes on their black kit glowing. The gathering of Saltford and Keynsham CC, affectionately known as Salt and Sham (thus, SAS) looks like a military operation.

But as I edge closer and the shadows fall away,

smiling relaxed faces are looking eagerly around. I hear laughter and excited chatter echoing down the otherwise sleepy street.

"It's great riding this morning!" I'm greeted by a warm and friendly West Country drawl. Neil Hale and Liam Odey have already completed the club's signature 30-mile loop and are grinning like Cheshire cats, champing at the bit for round two. Their excitement for riding ripples through the club.

"Have you ever ridden Chew Hill before?" We're just a few miles in when Richard Hall pulls alongside

me. Adjusting my gears in an attempt to keep up, I admit that I haven't. Hall has only been with the club for three months and rode the hill for the first time the previous week. It's the challenge that every new rider has their eye on tackling. He proudly shares his achievement with me and flashes a colourful wristband — the club's KOM trophy: "The next newbie who moves on to the full loop, taking in Chew Hill, I'll pass the wristband on to them."

Hall was first urged to join the club two years ago: "I didn't think I was good enough. I thought it would be elitist, but it's the complete opposite. Everyone is friendly and encouraging. I've gained so much confidence."

It's easy to see why Chew Hill is regarded as an SAS rite of passage. There are three ways up it, but the main one out of Chew Magna is 1.2km with its steepest gradients at the top. I'm convinced it takes its name from the fact that it has people chewing on their stem. One of the teenagers zips past the slower among us, shouting: "You guys look

Club facts

Based: Keynsham, Somerset
Members: 160
Formed: May 2013
Meets: Ashton Way car park.
Saturday 7am: formal ride, Lap o' Lakes. Tuesday 6pm: hill night around Bath. Thursday 6pm: chaingang around Chew Valley.

like you've put some weight on!" as he leaves most of the riders in his wake.

While the club may still be finding its feet in terms of racing (this competitive element is slowly evolving), something that is firmly established is the community feel and supportive environment that is the heart of Salt and Sham. Its motto "Collective cycling for all" has spread across the club's culture. This is clearly reflected as I look around and see riders who appear to be on their first few runs with the club. Some are in baggy kit and using flat pedals. Others are obviously aspiring racers out for a hard ride, and parents gently encouraging their children.

History

When Paul Walsh and his mates started riding together a few years ago, little did they know they were sowing the seeds of something greater.

"There were about seven of us," explains Walsh. "We'd meet outside the local church. Through the power of Facebook, more and more people began to join us."

It was back in early 2013 that the guys thought they should formalise their Saturday rides, and in May of that year Saltford and Keynsham CC were born.

The club now boasts 160 members, attracting cyclists from Bath and Bristol, with new riders rolling up almost weekly.

Their social media presence

allows members to organise their own rides on an informal basis and the club's vision — "collective cycling for all" — is reflected in the range of ages and abilities that take to the roads around the Chew Valley every Saturday.

This year the club have dipped their cleats into the world of racing and taken part in local TTs without losing sight of the club's vision: drawing names from a hat to put together their teams.

The club also has a fun side and is hugely proactive and organise summer barbecues and Christmas parties and a now legendary event, Run what yo' Brung, which sees willing participants complete the signature club lap on an unusual

bike, in fancy dress. Keen to put something back into the local cycling community, they are working with local charity, Wheels for All, to help purchase special needs bikes.

Achievements

It's the club's younger members that fly the flag when it comes to racing achievements.

■ George Beck, U16 national racer in Castle Combe Summer Series, rode to a second place at the Odd Down race in the Bath Circuit Series.

■ Beth Taylor (SAS is her second claim club) raced in the Ladies Tour of Bedford for Team Benito where she won the first stage and came second overall.



■ Sophie Taylor raced in the North West International Youth Tour and is part of the Olympic Development Programme. She represents the club in national events throughout the year.



Saltford & Keynsham club run

Ride highlights

1 Chew Hill

From the village of Chew Magna it's a mile of climbing that begins steadily before the gradient ramps up around the halfway point. As the name suggests, you will be chewing on your stem.

2 Chew Valley Lake

The largest lake in the Chew Valley and the fifth-largest artificial lake in England, this is the ride's beauty spot. The lake sits at the foot of the Mendips, which makes for great early morning viewing.

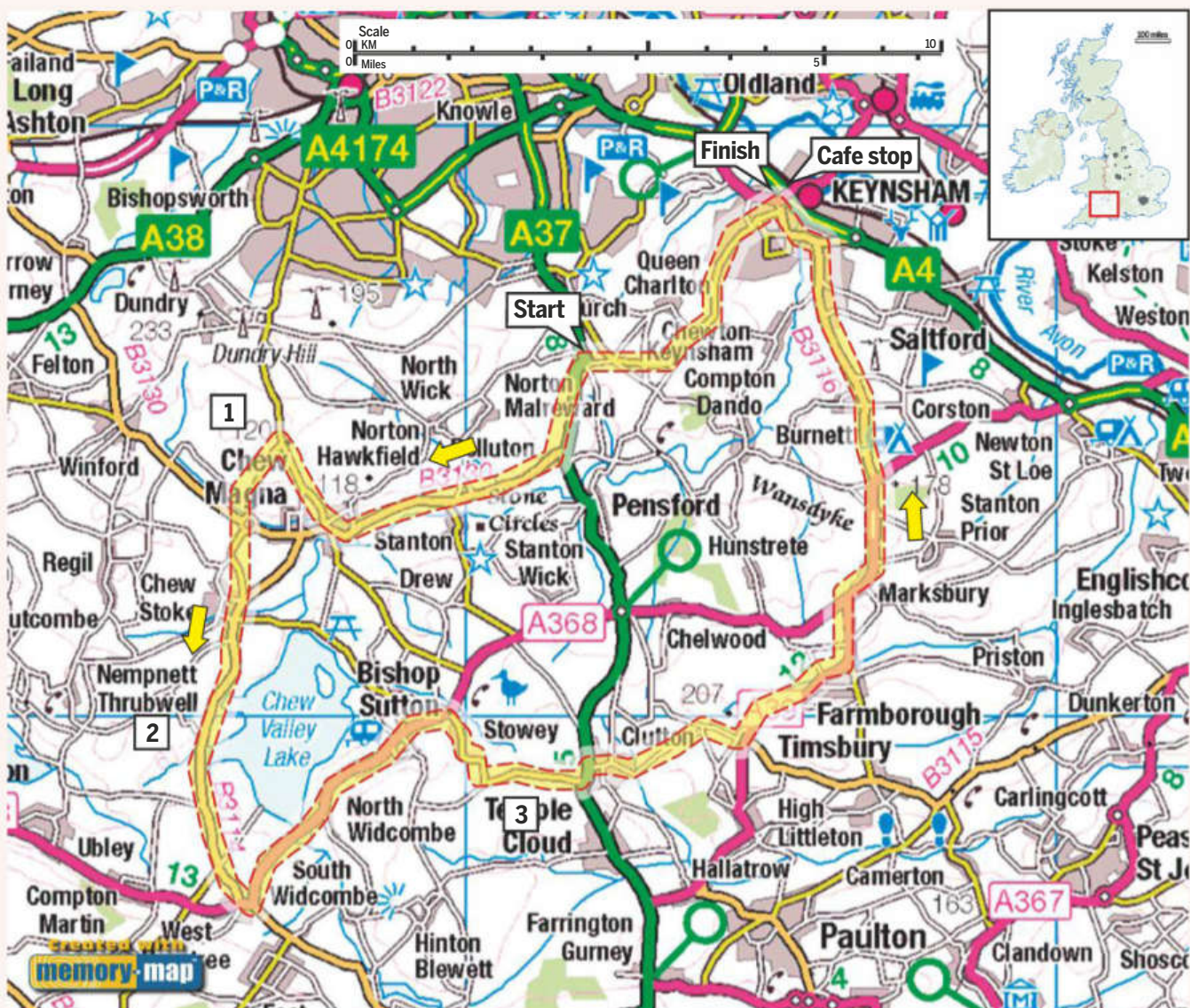
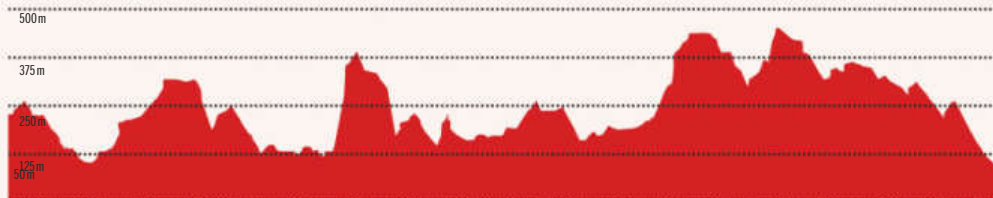
3 Stowey Hill

Fairly long, with two sweeping and testing bends that pull you to a gentler drag. It's then a run in to the finish.

Favourite cafe

The club took the decision to have their caffeine fix at the local Keynsham Cricket Club so that all members can come together to swap their riding stories. On a good day, all 160 members turn out; they felt this was too large a group to comfortably converge at a cafe.

The well-earned caffeine hit comes at the end of the ride, over animated chatter. Breakfast baps, toast, tea and coffee are flowing to get everyone refuelled ready for the rest of the weekend.





Salt and Sham's men and women in black are a common sight in the Chew Valley

Meet the club



Rob Hall: "Getting fit with like-minded people has worked wonders for me. I can't believe I'm 42 and just started racing."



Gemma Easom: "I feel really supported in the group. It's so encouraging; I've picked up tips and have learnt a lot."



Having a laugh is a key requirement



Descending on the cricket club for coffee



Richard Hall: "It's the perfect ride for parents. We can head out early and get back home to enjoy our day or another ride!"



Dale Archer: "I like riding with my dad. We go out most weeks, but not in the rain."

Barely a ripple

The view of Chew Valley Lake is just one of the things that made the early alarm call worth it. If it weren't for the chatter of over 80 riders, the only noise here would be the gentle ripple of the water as egrets go about their morning fishing. This area is picture perfect and amazing riding terrain. This is the ride's halfway point and where I announce my decision to drop

down into a slower group — a decision unsurprisingly met with a good deal of ribbing. Just over an hour with the guys and I was already being treated like a true 'Shammer'.

The club's community feel is already deeply engrained. At the end of the ride, each and every member gathers together at Keynsham Cricket Club to chat over a coffee. "This aspect is really important to us," explained

one of the club's founders, Paul Walsh. "In some clubs, you might not see riders who ride in a different group to you but here we all know each other — it's like a family."

Salt and Sham may not yet have a long-woven history but their strong community ethos, where cycling is taken seriously while having fun, is setting down strong roots and certainly makes SAS a special force in what they do. ■

Training DVDs

3LC training DVD series

3LC ROAD RACE



Only £19.99

3LC ROAD RACE

We know you want to be out on the road, but for some reason you're stuck on your turbo. To ease the pain, why not ride with a couple of pros by your side? Join British Track and U-23 Road Race Champ Peter Kennaugh, 2011 World Champ Mark Cavendish and a crew of local Manx riders as they power through a 60-minute turbo session designed to get you ready for the road.



3LC SPRINTING



Only £19.99

3LC SPRINTING

What better way to improve your sprint than to train with the fastest man on two wheels – Mark “the Manx Missile” Cavendish. Ride alongside the 2011 World Champion and a crew of local Manx riders as they power through the pedals, push into the red zone and test the limits of their Elite Turbos.



3LC TIME TRIAL



Only £19.99

3LC TIME TRIAL

When it comes to time trialing it's just you, your machine and the clock. No teammates to help you, no tactics to hide behind - any mistake made belongs to you and only you. Not to worry - we'll train your body to maintain the pace and your mind to handle the pressure.



3LC CLIMBING



Only £19.99

3LC CLIMBING

It's no big secret...climbing is tough - but we're here to help. Join Team Sky's British and European track champion Peter Kennaugh, Steve “the Pocket Rocket” Joughin, and a crew of local Manx riders as they dig deep for the hilltop finish. Keep up and you'll be dancing on the pedals in no time.



3LC LADIES ROAD RACE



Only £19.99

3LC LADIES ROAD RACE

Whether you're training for the upcoming season, a weekend sportive or to improve overall fitness, 3LC Ladies Road Race is the perfect addition to your training regime. Join the Inter-Island Games Gold Medal winning team (Mary, Laura & Ali) and a crew of local lady Manx riders as they power through a turbo session designed with female fitness in mind.



3LC.TV



Yorks Hill

Sevenoaks, Kent

Simon Warren

I love it. I hate it. I love it. I hate it. Each year I line up at the bottom of Yorks Hill to ride the famous Catford CC hill-climb. Each year I question my sanity as the timekeeper counts down to zero and I set off into a world of leg-burning hell. The first part of the climb is gentle and requires a contained effort: do not go too hard, too soon — stay calm. Once under the trees the gradient ramps up close to 20 per cent and you now have no choice but

CW
Difficulty
rating:
6/10

to go hard. However, if you can, try to hold back. In the middle of the climb there's a slight S-bend, which ushers in the finale, and this is why I love this road. During the race, waiting for you on the final 20 per cent slopes, and in contrast to the silence at the bottom, will be a throng of screaming spectators, packing the road, then parting to allow you to pass through — yes, just like in the Tour de France. You have to work damn hard for it, but for just a few fleeting moments you too can be Chris Froome on the slopes of Alpe d'Huez.

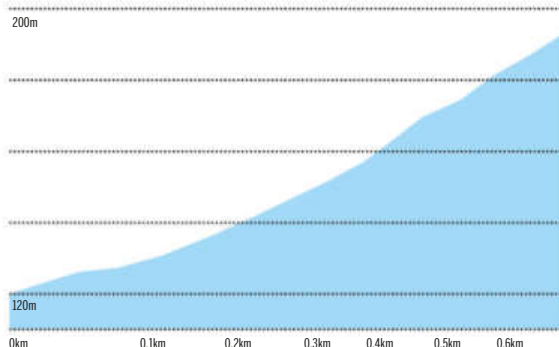
The stats

WHERE Yorks Hill is a tiny lane situated north-east of Bough Beech Reservoir and runs parallel with the climb of Ide Hill on the B2042. The hill-climb course starts just before Yorks Hill Farm on the right.



KOM Top Tip Ride at 95% until you see the top then let rip.

| | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| 650m | 202m | 82m | 13% | 20% |
| Length | Summit height | Height gain | Average gradient | Max gradient |



Strava file: www.strava.com/segments/6691251



Yorks grit: a chance to feel like the pros

Photo: Dave Hayward



Ordnance Survey mapping © Crown copyright. AM46/13. Created with Memory-Map

Confidence counts for Armitstead

Self-belief and an instinctively assured ride sees British star crowned world champion in Richmond

Words: Richard Abraham Photos: Yuzuru Sunada

Lizzie Armitstead knew exactly what she had to do in the World Championships road race. Twelve months earlier she had missed out on the rainbow jersey due to indecision and impatience, and the ensuing ‘what-ifs’ had haunted her throughout the off-season. This time around she wasn’t going to leave the race with any regrets, even if it meant risking losing out again.

There was a self-confidence to Armitstead’s approach that was, perhaps, missing last year. She had read the nature of the course and the race before it had even begun. The two rivals she predicted would do well in Richmond, Anna van der Breggen and Elisa Longo Borghini, finished second and fourth.

“Last year I went onto that race with a lot of people giving me a lot of different advice on how to be patient and all these different things were going round in my mind, rather than racing on instinct which is how I like to race,” she told *Cycling Weekly*.

“I remember as a track rider going into points races with a plan and then as soon as I stopped going into races with plans, that’s when I did better. I’ve realised I need to be flexible and go on my instinct in a race and just be confident that physically I’m in a good enough shape to win it.”

Armitstead’s racing instinct has never been in doubt, but her confidence and self-belief was arguably what won her the rainbow jersey last Saturday in the USA after a silver medal in the team time trial the previous Sunday, her first elite medal on the road.

“I’ve had them on the track and even though I’ve been a road rider now for over four years, sometimes I feel like a

newcomer, which is ridiculous for anyone who knows a bit about road riding,” she said before the road race last week. “But to be on a Worlds podium reassures me that I have the right to be there.”

Racing on instinct

By relying on her instinct, she turned what would be seen as a disadvantage — a young and relatively inexperienced team unlikely to support her in the finale — to her favour. She waited and waited in the final lap as a move of nine riders dangled in front of the bunch. To the outside world it looked dangerous,

“Sometimes I feel like a newcomer — to be on a Worlds podium reassures me that I have a right to be there”

but Armitstead knew the make-up of the group wouldn’t be a threat.

Once the Dutch team had worked to bring back the move, Armitstead’s attack on the cobbles of 23rd Street was enough to ditch many of her rivals and when she went for a second time on Governor Street just eight riders could follow, all of whom she was confident of beating in the sprint. When the sprint to the line came, she stuck to the left, let Anna Van der Breggen take it on, and nipped past her to the line.

Her physical dominance was clear to the riders around her. “Any time Lizzie attacks it’s going to put everyone in the hurt box,” described her trade team-mate and bronze medallist Megan Guarnier. “I think I did a good sprint but Lizzie was faster,” said a disappointed Van der Breggen.

This was no lucky win. It was a victory from the strongest rider in the race, and the one who was in complete control. Lizzie Armitstead rode the race the way the world’s best rider should. She is every bit the worthy world champion.

How Lizzie won the Worlds

Armitstead’s five steps to winning the rainbow jersey

Team time trial silver

Armitstead had always planned to ride the team time trial with her Boels-Dolmans team. Not only did the second place, six seconds down on winners Velocio-SRAM, give her confidence a huge boost, it allowed her to acclimatise to Richmond and overcome her jet lag.

Dutch worked to pull back the break

With nine riders clear by a minute inside the

final lap, it wasn’t looking good for Armitstead. However, she benefited from the Dutch team pulling and was content to sit tight and hope that the chase would be successful.

Dig on 23rd Street

Armitstead’s upping of the tempo on 23rd Street distanced some of the threatening sprinters including Giorgia Bronzini (Italy, 27th) and Jolien D’Hoore (Belgium, 49th).

46

Riders to DNF in the women's road race

75

Participating nations in this year's races

1986

The last time the Worlds took place in the USA

2008

Last time Tony Martin finished off the podium in the Worlds TT

7

Armitstead's previous best Worlds result (in '11 & '14)



Results

Elite women's road race, 129.6km

1. Lizzie Armitstead (GBr) in 3-23-56
2. Anna van der Breggen (Ned)
3. Megan Guarnier (USA)
4. Elisa Longo Borghini (Ita)
5. Emma Johansson (Swe)
6. Pauline Ferrand Prevet (Fra)
7. Katarzyna Niewiadoma (Pol)
8. Alena Amialiusik (Blr)
9. Jolanda Neff (Sui) all at same time
10. Ellen Van Dijk (Ned) at 0-09

Other

79. Hayley Simmonds (GBr) at 5-41
DNF Alice Barnes (GBr)
DNF Lucy Garner (GBr)
DNF Jessie Walker (GBr)
DNF Molly Weaver (GBr)

Elite men's time trial, 53.5km

1. Vasil Kiryienka (Blr) in 1-02-29
2. Adriano Malori (Ita) at 0-09
3. Jérôme Coppel (Fra) at 0-26
4. Jonathan Castroviejo (Spa) at 0-29
5. Tom Dumoulin (Ned) at 1-01
6. Rohan Dennis (Aus) at 1-07
7. Tony Martin (Ger) at 1-16
8. Maciej Bodnar (Pol) at 1-17
9. Marcin Bialoblocki (Pol) at 1-22
10. Moreno Moser (Ita) at 1-31

Other

14. Steve Cummings (GBr) at 1-58
17 Alex Dowsett (GBr) at 2-06

Elite women's time trial, 29.9km

1. Linda Villumsen (NZ) in 40-29
2. Anna van der Breggen (Ned) at 0-02
3. Lisa Brennauer (Ger) at 0-05
4. Katrin Garfoot (Aus) at 0-09
5. Kristin Armstrong (USA) at 0-26
6. Evelyn Stevens (USA) at 0-26
7. Ellen Van Dijk (Ned) at 0-53
8. Alena Amialiusik (Blr) at 1-06
9. Ann-Sofie Duyck (Bel) at 1-19
10. Trixi Worrack (Ger) at 1-19

Other

26. Hayley Simmonds (GBr) 2-54

Attack on Governor Street

Her second attack in succession helped thin the field even more. Just eight riders could follow Armitstead as she hit the field on the final drag inside the final kilometre.

Sprint finish

Confident of her finishing speed, Armitstead hugged the left barriers and waited for Anna van der Breggen to move around her. She hopped on the Dutchwoman's wheel and comfortably came around her with 150m to go.



Armitstead played the perfect hand to win

Sagan finds his pot of gold

Perfectly-timed attack on the final cobbled climb cements Slovak ace's place in cycling history

Words: Richard Abraham Photos: Yuzuru Sunada

From cobbled Classics to Grand Tour stages, so often in recent years has Peter Sagan been the clear favourite in a bike race that he hasn't really known what to do about it.

During the World Championships, however, Sagan wasn't the clear favourite. In fact, he was one of any number of potential winners, with many nations bringing with them to Richmond, Virginia a stable of thoroughbred talent, all with a chance of victory. Whether it was Germany with André Greipel, John Degenkolb and Tony Martin, Belgium with Tom Boonen, Philippe Gilbert and Greg Van Avermaet or Italy with Vincenzo Nibali, Matteo Trentin and Elia Viviani, riders remarked that this year's race was the most open in years.

Puncheurs, sprinters, rouleurs, and even GC riders like Tom Dumoulin and Bauke Mollema all tried their luck over the Richmond course. The lack of a clear favourite helped create a race that riders afterwards described as odd — exceptionally hard in places but generally easy in others.

"It was a strange old day; it was hard at times but not hard all the time and then it started getting harder and harder," Ben

Swift, top British finisher in 22nd, told *Cycling Weekly*.

After Jos Van Emden of the Netherlands had ridden to what amounted to the first 100 miles out in front of the bunch, the pace of the race increased and moves started to fly off. Ian Stannard led a dangerous looking group, including Boonen, Mollema and Michal Kwiatkowski, on the antepenultimate time up the climb of 23rd Street, though it amounted to nothing.

"It was just [a case of] put in the work and then see where you got," Stannard said. "Maybe if we'd made it into the last lap it would have been different."

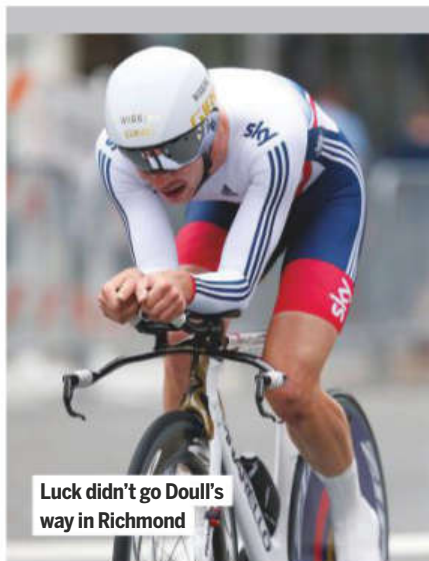
This year's road race was a little bit like any Milan-San Remo; over the distance of 260km every little packet of energy expended could add up later on. The best place to be is out of sight and out of the wind. It was how John Degenkolb won

"There can be no doubt that Sagan is now the best rider in the world"

San Remo earlier this season; it was how Sagan, who was barely visible all day, played the race perfectly here. Riders generally only have one move to make; Sagan's came at just the right time — on the final climb of the cobbled 23rd Street and down the other side. And when it did, it was strong enough to win him the rainbow jersey.

Sagan will make a popular world champion, both with riders and fans. He received a round of high fives from fellow racers on the finish line after he'd won. His relief at finally nabbing the big win his palmarès had been missing was apparent; he bounced around from podium to press conference, delighting the fans with his antics and boyish charm while entertaining and bemusing the press with bizarre, off-the-wall statements about the migrant crisis and future of the human race.

There can be no doubt that Sagan is now the best rider in the world; his sheer versatility, determination and talent has now been topped off with a rainbow jersey. But if he thought he had a hard time winning before, doing it with the most distinctive jersey in cycling on his shoulders will be another matter. It will, however, be tremendous fun to watch.



Worlds shorts

Doull falls short

Great Britain's Owain Doull came up short in the U23 men's road race after a combination of mechanical mishaps and crashes in the final lap derailed his hopes of a medal. The Welshman, 22, finished fifth in the U23 time trial behind Mads Würtz Schmidt (Denmark) and was a pre-race favourite at the head of a strong GB team. Kevin Ledanois went on to take a narrow solo win and belted out La Marseillaise on the podium. "I couldn't fault the team, they gave everything for me and it's a bit disappointing that I couldn't finish it off," Doull said.

Kiryienka confounds predictions

Few very people had Sky's Belarussian super-domestique Vasil Kiryienka down as a possible winner of the men's time trial last Wednesday, but the gurning 34 year-old blitzed the 53.5km course to beat Adriano Malori and Jérôme Coppel. Three-time champion Tony Martin (seventh) ended the race with the coarse, grippy surface from his saddle against his bare skin having rubbed through his skinsuit. Great Britain's race also ended in disappointment as Steve Cummings (14th) and Alex Dowsett (17th) were unable to

16.2km

Length of the road race circuit

103m

Total amount of ascent per lap

4

Previous world champions in the men's road race top 10

6

Peter Sagan's previous best world result

6

Junior medals won by home nation USA

**Results****Elite men's road race, 261.4km**

- 1. Peter Sagan (Svk) in 6-14-37**
 2. Michael Matthews (Aus) at 0-03
 3. Ramunas Navardauskas (Ltu)
 4. Alexander Kristoff (Nor)
 5. Alejandro Valverde (Esp)
 6. Simon Gerrans (Aus)
 7. Tony Gallopin (Fra)
 8. Michal Kwiatkowski (Pol)
 9. Rui Costa (Por)
 10. Philippe Gilbert (Bel) all at same time
- Other**
22. Ben Swift (GBr) at 0-03
 31. Steve Cummings (GBr) at 0-15
 51. Ian Stannard (GBr) at 0-55
 57. Adam Yates (GBr) at same time
 101. Scott Thwaites (GBr) at 6-43
 - DNF Luke Rowe (GBr)
 - DNF Andy Fenn (GBr)
 - DNF Alex Dowsett (GBr)

U23 men**Road race, 162.2km**

1. Kevin Ledanois (Fra) in 3-54-45
 2. Simone Consonni (Ita) at same time
 3. Anthony Turgis (Fra) at 0-02
- Other**
92. Owain Doull (GBr) at 4-40
 119. Tao Geoghegan Hart (GBr) at 15-19
 126. Scott Davies (GBr) at 17-01
 127. Alex Peters (GBr) at same time
 - DNF Gabriel Cullaigh (GBr)

Time trial, 29.9km

1. Mads Würtz Schmidt (Den) in 37-10
 2. Maximilian Schachmann (Ger) at 0-12
 3. Lennard Kämna (Ger) at 0-21
- Other**
7. Owain Doull (GBr) at 0-36
 34. Scott Davies (GBr) at 2-19

Junior women**Road race, 64.9km**

1. Chloe Dygert (USA) in 1-42-16
 2. Emma White (USA) at 1-23
 3. Agnieszka Skalniak (Pol) at 1-28
- Other**
7. Grace Garner (GBr) at 1-41
 18. Abby-Mae Parkinson (GBr) at s.t
 35. Lizzie Holden (GBr) at 3-46
 39. Eleanor Dickinson (GBr) at same time

Time trial, 15.0km

1. Chloe Dygert (USA) in 20-18
 2. Emma White (USA) at 1-05
 3. Anna-Leeza Hull (Aus) at 1-26
- Other**
23. Abby-Mae Parkinson (GBr) at 2-22
 31. Lizzie Holden (GBr) at 3-06

Junior men**Road race, 129.8km**

1. Felix Gall (Aut) in 3-11-09
 2. Clement Betout-Suire (Fra) at same time
 3. Rasmus Pedersen (Den) at 0-01
- Other**
8. Nathan Draper (GBr) at 0-13
 19. Joey Walker (GBr) at 0-36
 - DNF Joe Holt (GBr)

Time trial, 29.9km

1. Leo Appelt (Ger) in 37-45
2. Adrien Costa (USA) at 0-17
3. Brandon McNulty (USA) at 0-59

earn a second spot for the Rio Olympic TT. The best performance from a British-based rider was by One's Pole Marcin Bialoblocki, who lives in Bridgwater, Somerset. He came ninth.

Victorious Villumsen slapped with fine

Linda Villumsen's first victory in the women's event almost came at the expense of her job as she rode an all-black bike — believed to be an unbranded Trek — rather than a Wilier, as used by her UnitedHealthcare trade team. UHC boss Mike Tamayo considered sacking Villumsen, whose last-minute equipment change wasn't against UCI rules and was backed by her national federation. He later confirmed that her punishment would probably be a fine.

Dygert shines at home

The home hero of the week's racing was undoubtedly 18-year-old Chloe Dygert, who took solo victories in both the junior women's events, with team-mate Emma White second on both occasions. Indiana-born Dygert's luck was clearly in last week; she won a third rainbow jersey in a raffle held in the official race fan park.

Britain's Grace Garner put in a strong ride to finish just 13 seconds off the podium and was clearly pleased with seventh in the road race: "After last year when I had a really bad race, I'm really happy to finish up there," she said. British junior road race champion Nathan Draper finished eighth in the junior men's road race with Joey Walker, son of former pro Chris, in 19th.

Teacher hands out Welsh TT lesson

Kieron Davies broke the Welsh competition record on his way to claiming the Welsh 50-Mile Championship held on the A40 between Abergavenny and Raglan on Sunday.

The 28-year-old teacher and Drag2zero.com rider has been in great form over 25 miles and put in a fantastic ride to stop the clock at 1:39.16, a personal best by more than five minutes.

Billy Oliver (Nopinz.com) was his closest competitor, almost seven minutes behind on 1:47.50, while female champion was Oliver's Nopinz team-mate Crystal Spearman with 2:01.37.

In hill-climbing, Adam Kenway (SportGrub-Kuota) made it three wins in a row with victory in the Stocksbridge CC Pea Royd Lane climb near Sheffield. He clocked 2:24.6 for the 860-yard climb, while national champion Dan Evans was a non-starter.

In Berkshire, former national champ Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy CT) won the Newbury RC 1.18-mile climb of Walbury Hill by 15 seconds from Joe Norledge (Procyling RT). Women's national champion Maryka Sennema (Paceline RT) took another win in the women's event with 4:50.20.

In Lancaster, David Huck (Lakes RC) won both stages of the Lancaster CC climbs of Conder Bottoms and Jubilee Tower, while in Yorkshire mountain biker Tom Bell (Fluid Fin RT) won the Halifax Imperial Wheelers hill-climb at Luddenden and

the promoting club's Ben Harmer won Bridlington CC's hill-climb at Flixton.

Ben Sumner (Beeline-Gener8) added to his list of cyclo-cross wins with victory in the Central League at RAF Halton on Sunday. This adds to his wins in the Wessex League and Eastern League already in 2015.

Sixteen-year-old Harry Yates (Hargroves Cycles) sprinted clear of former pro Dan Fleeman (SportGrub KUOTA) to win round four of the BWA West Midlands League at Baggeridge Country Park.

JLT-Condor's Graham Briggs took victory in the SRAM Notts and Derby League at Markeaton Park in Derby on Saturday, and repeated the feat in the Lincolnshire League at Sleaford Rugby Club on Sunday. In both races, he held off fellow pro Tom Stewart (Madison-Genesis).

Round three of the Western League in Bristol was won by former elite roadman Simon Richardson (GCN), making a return to racing for the first time since 2013.

Rider of the week

Jody Cundy (Para-T) British Track Championships

The multiple Paralympic champion took the British title in the Para-cycling mixed C1-C5 200-metre time trial, setting a new British C4 record with a stunning time of 10.531 (10.380 factored) in Manchester.

Hill climbs

Sunday, September 27

Lancaster CC Jubilee Towers hill climb (Lancaster, Lancashire, 1.75 miles):

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. David Huck (Lakes Road Club) | 8.05 |
| 2. J. Findley (High on Bikes) | 8.20 |
| 3. R. Bideau (Pendle Forest CC) | 8.30 |
| 4. M. Moorhouse (Preston CC) | 8.43 |
| 5. P. Thomas (Kent Valley RC) | 8.43 |
| 6. C. Smith (Condor RC) | 8.47 |
| 7. M. Nulty (Glossop Kinder Velo) | 8.58 |
| 8. T. Brook (Lancaster CC) | 9.13 |
| 9. M. Wilkinson (Yorkshire Road Club) | 9.20 |
| 10. P. Targett (Pendle Forest CC) | 10.05 |

Veteran: Richard Bideau; **Woman:** Mary Wilkinson

Newbury RC

(Walbury Hill, Berkshire, 1.18 miles):

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy Cycling Team) | 3:59.82 |
| 2. J. Norledge (Procyling Magazine RT) | 4:15.00 |
| 3. R. Gildea (Didcot Phoenix CC) | 4:25.40 |
| 4. A. Fisk (Oxford University CC) | 4:25.81 |
| 5. M. Posner (Soton University Road Club) | 4:28.47 |
| 6. T. To (Scunthorpe Road Club) | 4:35.24 |
| 7. D. Woodhouse (CC Ashwell) | 4:35.54 |
| 8. A. Murchison (Banjo Cycles.com) | 4:35.98 |
| 9. T. Willemssen (University of Warwick Tri & Road Club) | 4:37.03 |
| 10. H. Chamberlain (Soton Uni Road Club) | 4:37.73 |

Woman: Maryka Sennema (Paceline RT) 4:50.20

Veteran: Alan Murchison

Junior: Joseph Linehan (RPRacing) 4:51.02

Lancaster CC Conder Bottoms hill climb

(Lancaster, Lancashire, 0.5 miles):

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. David Huck (Lakes Road Club) | 1.50 |
| 2. J. Findley (High on Bikes) | 2.08 |
| 3. T. Brook (Lancaster CC) | 2.13 |
| 4. M. Nulty (Glossop Kinder Velo) | 2.16 |
| 5. C. Smith (Condor RC) | 2.17 |
| 6. D. Murphy (Liverpool Mercury Dolan CC) | 2.21 |
| 7. M. Muir (Lancaster CC) | 2.30 |
| 8. Jo. Hatton (Lancaster CC) | 2.34 |
| 9. B. Horton (Salt Ayre Cog-set) | 2.38 |
| 10. N. Dykes (Lancaster CC) | 2.42 |

Veteran: John Hatton (Lancaster CC)

Woman: Holly Carter (Manchester Wheelers) 3.23

Stocksbridge CC hill climb (Stocksbridge, South

Yorkshire, 860 yards):

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Adam Kenway (SportGrub Kuota) | 2:24.6 |
| 2. J. Clark (Bike Box Alan Envelopemaster) | 2:26.4 |
| 3. L. Baldwin (Champion System VCUK) | 2:31.3 |
| 4. T. Bell (Fluid Fin Race Team) | 2:36.0 |
| 5. C. Bevan (University of Sheffield CC) | 2:38.4 |
| 6. A. Cross (University of Sheffield CC) | 2:41.8 |
| 7. C. Stewart (Sheffrec CC) | 2:43.0 |
| 8. C. Myhill (Peak Road Club) | 2:44.1 |
| 9. L. Wright (Team PB Performance) | 2:44.3 |
| 10. M. Brown (University of Sheffield CC) | 2:46.0 |

Woman:

1. Nicola Soden (Stocksbridge CC/Irwin Mitchell Solicitors) 3:32.1

2. J. Van Campen (Sheffrec CC) 3:33.1

3. A. Deck (Langsett Cycles RT) 3:53.2

Team:

University of Sheffield (Archie Cross, Christopher Bevan and Matthew Brown) 8:03.02

Junior male: Henry Cash (Holmfirth CC) 3:00.1

Junior female: Eve Lyon (Nutcracker Racing) 4:48.1

40-44 male: Timothy Webster (Holmfirth CC) 3:08.6

45-49 male: Chris Myhill (Peak Road Club) 2:44.1

45-49 female: Alex Deck

(Langsett Cycles RT) 3:53.2

50-54 male: David Cass (Sheffrec CC) 4:17.8

55-59 male: Mike Kelly (Team Milton Keynes) 4:09.4

60+ male: Paul Heggie (Birdwell Wheelers) 4:31.4

Saturday, September 26

Scottish National Championship

(Logie Kirk, Stirling):

| | |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Walter Hamilton (Velo Club Edinburgh) | 4.30 |
| 2. M. McGuire (Mountain Trax) | 4.32 |
| 3. H. Johnston (Team Thomsons Cycles) | 4.34 |
| 4. F. Roberts (unattached) | 4.36 |
| 5. A. Doyle (Dooleys Cycles) | 4.38 |
| 6. G. Shuttleworth (Project 51) | 4.42 |
| 7. G. Dempster (Glasgow Green CC) | 4.43 |
| 8. A. Dean (Edinburgh RC) | 4.47 |
| 9. R. Cunningham (Glasgow Green CC) | 4.49 |
| 10. J. Kennedy (Paisley Velo RT) | 4.51 |

Juniors: Mark McGuire

Under-23s: Gavin Shuttleworth

Women: Genevieve Whitson (WV Avanti) 5.34

Halifax Imperial Wh

(Stocks Lane, Luddenden, West Yorks, 900 yards):

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Tom Bell (Fluid Fin Race Team) | 4:57.6 |
| 2. B. Davis (Wheelbase Altura MGD) | 4:58.8 |
| 3. J. Ragan (The Nab Racing Team) | 5:13.9 |
| 4. C. Dyke (Manchester Bicycle Club) | 5:22.0 |
| 5. J. Taylor (Uni of Warwick Tri and Road Club) | 5:22.7 |
| 6. B. Jacobs (Albarosa CC) | 5:31.1 |
| 7. N. Allatt (Royal Navy and Marines CA) | 5:39.9 |
| 8. R. Binks (PH-MAS Cycling) | 5:48.5 |
| 9. C. Smith (Condor Road Club) | 5:51.4 |
| 10. A. Pearson (HD Revolutions) | 5:55.0 |

Woman: Helen Roby (HD Revolutions) 7:11.0

Leigh Premier RC

(Sheephouse Lane, Rivington, Lancashire, 3km):

| | |
|----------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Louis Szymanski (ABC Centreville) | 7:43.40 |
| 2. M. Tickle (Leigh Premier RC) | 7:52.60 |
| 3. C. Smith (Condor RC) | 8:17.00 |
| 4. C. Edmondson (Fibrex-Wrexham) | 8:26.30 |
| 5. M. Turnbull (Torq Performance) | 8:35.80 |
| 6. D. Murphy (Liverpool Mercury Dolan) | 8:44.30 |
| 7. B. Huddart (Lancashire RC) | 8:47.30 |
| 8. T. Brook (Lancashire RC) | 8:49.50 |
| 9. R. Liverland (Holmfirth CC) | 9:19.00 |
| 10. N. Turnbull (Leigh Premier RC) | 9:21.00 |

Women: Josephine Gilbert (Starley Primal CT) 9:57.07

Veteran: Mark Turnbull

Cyclo-cross

Sunday, September 27

Three Peaks

(Horton-in-Ribblesdale, North Yorkshire):

Men: 1. Paul Oldham (Hope Factory Racing) 61 kilometres in 2:59.33; 2. R. Jebb (Hope Factory Racing) 3:00.49; 3. N. Craig (Scott Racing) 3:03.59; 4. J. Pugh (The Bulls) 3:08.02; 5. T. Gould (Zepnat.com RT - GSG Clothing - Lazer) 3:10.08; 6. D. Whitehead (Bike Station Ballater) 3:11.03; 7. A. Lansley (Pedal On) 3:13.18; 8. R. Henry (Numpulmz) 3:14.31; 9. I. Taylor (C and N Cycles RT) 3:16.09; 10. J. Moses (JLT Condor) 3:16.29.

Women: 1. Jules Toone (Torq Performance) 61 kilometres in 3:57.07; 2. V. Appleyard (Brotherton Cycles) 4:01.22; 3. I. Rowntree (Islabikes) 4:09.00; 4. H. Tuffs (Clifton Cycling Club - Haxby Cycles) 4:16.34; 5. R. Gamwell (Macclesfield Wheelers) 4:18.20; 6. H. Saville (csmagazine.com) 4:20.46; 7. M. Horsley Frost (Buxton CC) 4:21.04; 8. H. Benson (Ilkley CC) 4:23.40; 9. E. Birles (Lichfield CCC) 4:28.29; 10. K. Pehrson (Dirvelo CK Stockholm) 4:30.05.

Snowdon Sports supply domestic results and reports to *Cycling Weekly*. Please send your information to results@snowdons.co.uk or call 0114 232 5555 and we will do our best to include them in our expanded racing section.

West Midlands League round 4
(Baggeridge Country Park, West Midlands):

1. Harry Yates (Hargrove Cycles) 46.53; 2. D. Fleeman (SportGrub KUOTA) +0.04; 3. E. Grivell-Mellor (Mid Shropshire Wh) +1.02; 4. B. Wadley (Clee Cycles) +1.11; 5. L. Grivell-Mellor (JLT Condor) +1.13; 6. G. Moore (Bicicelo) at 1.26
Juniors: Harry Yates
Veterans 40: Darren Atkins (Ride Coventry)
Veterans 50: Kirby Bennett (Team Jewson-MI Racing)
Women: Beth Crumpton (North West CC)
Youth boys: Toby Barnes (Lichfield City CC)
Youth girls: Harriet Harnden (Malvern Cycle Sport)
Under-12 boys: Ben Askey (Lichfield City CC)
Under-12 girls: Grace Lister (Wolverhampton Wheelers)
Under-10 boys: Spencer Corder (Stratford CC)
Under-10 girls: Tia Carr (Lichfield City CC)
Under-8 boys: George Cooper (Bolsover and Dist CC)
Under-8 girls: Holly Saunders (Solihull CC)
Under-6s: Tamsin Moss (Stratford CC)

Saturday, September 26

SRAM Notts and Derby League round 3 (Markeaton Park, Derby):

1. Graham Briggs (JLT-Condor) 51.46; 2. T. Stewart (Madison-Genesis) +1.15; 3. J. Harper (Mansfield RC) +2.31; 4. T. Seaman (Team Seaman) +3.56; 5. A. Green (Clee Cycles) +3.59; 6. L. Shunburne (Fossa Racing) +4.12
Under-23s: Jonathan Harper
Juniors: Joshua Waters
Women: Diane Lee
Junior women: Sophia Chastell (M and D Cycles)
Veteran women: Maddi Smith (Bolsover + Dist CC)
Veterans 40-45: Jim Bryan (Zepnat RT)
Veterans 45-50: Dan Cook (Peak RC)
Veterans 50-55: Graham Clark (Elmore Factory)
Veterans 55-60: Ian Watts (Cotswold Veldriden)
Veterans 60: Andy Jones (Wolverhampton)
Youth boy: Jenson Young (Pedalsport CC)
Youth girl: Ellie Smith (Fossa Racing)
Under-12s: Finlay Hill (Matlock CC)
Under-12 girls: Jessica Tiffany (Derby Mercury RC)
Under-9s: Ryan Oldfield (Redditch R&PCC)

Road racing

Sunday, September 27

Fastest Highest Strongest Criterium round 4
(UCLAN Sports Arena, Preston, Lancs):

2, 3, 4: 1. Dave Allonby (Cleveleys RC); 2. M. Draper (Velocity Globalbike); 3. B. Whitehead (East Lancashire RC); 4. J. Farrington (SportCity Velo); 5. R. Shirley (Harry Middleton CC); 6. L. Jackson (Harry Middleton CC); 7. D. Parrington (Ribble Valley CRC); 8. S. Pickering (THR Racing); 9. T. Lowe (Lancaster University CC); 10. J. Auty (CS Pendle).

Great Orme Road Race (Llandudno, Wales):

Men 2, 3, 4: 1. Andrew Turner (NFTO Race Club); 2. J. Eldridge (NFTO Race Club); 3. D. Kerfoot-Robson (Mountain Trax RT); 4. K. Vickers (Mid-Shropshire Wheelers); 5. C. Fallon (Liverpool Mercury CC); 6. W. Lewis (High Peak Cycles RT); 7. D. Hudson (Liverpool Century RC); 8. I. Smallwood (Cardiff Ajax); 9. C. Middleton (Climb On Bikes RT); 10. J. Fletcher (Chester RC).
Women 2, 3, 4: 1. Amy Gornall (Corley Cycles-Drops); 2. R. Taylor (Manchester Wheelers); 3. A. Speake (Islington CC); 4. B. Hoare (Army CU); 5. S. Clayton (Stafford RC); 6. R. Cook (Hafren CC).
Masters: Adrian Timmis (Cadence Sport)
Youth A boys: Jack Ford (Holmfrith CC)
Youth A girls: Cadi Jones (Energy Cycles RT)

Youth B boys: Dylan Westley (Albarosa CC)
Youth B girls: Ava Oxley (PH MAS VCUK)

Time trials

Sunday, September 27

Welsh CA 50-mile Championship
(Abergavenny, Wales):

1. Kieron Davies (Drag2zero.Com) 1:39.16
2. B. Oliver (Nopinz.com) 1:47.50
3. R. Hunt (Severn Valley) 1:49.19
4. S. Birnie (Willesden CC) 1:51.09
5. A. Roberts (Team Elite) 1:52.47
6. D. Shepherd (GS Stella) 1:53.12
7. G. Boswell (Cardiff Ajax) 1:53.30
8. C. Velloccott (Royal Navy and Royal Marines CA) 1:54.11
9. J. Ford (CC Blaenau Gwent) 1:54.22
10. S. Cottingham (Cadence RT) 1:54.26
Woman: Crystal Spearman (Nopinz.com) 2:01.37
Team: Cardiff Ajax; **Veteran:** Graeme Shepherd

Gloucester City CC 25 (Maiseamore, Gloucestershire):

1. Dean Robson (Somerset Road Club) 54.22
2. M. Burden (Severn Road Club) 55.07
3. P. Jones (Severn Valley Cycles) 57.07
4. H. Walton (Cheltenham and County CC) 58.14
5. G. Davis (Dursley RC) 58.48
6. S. Wix (VTTA South West) 1:00.20
7. M. Brearton (Endurance) 1:00.55
8. J. Ellerby (Velo Vitesse) 1:01.55
9. L. Jones (Severn Valley Cycles) 1:01.22
10. O. Dammone (Gloucester City CC) 1:02.02
Three-Up: Gloucester City CC
(Alistair Kay, Paul Winstome, Neil Bone) 1:03.03
Women: Joanne Jago (Performance Cycles) 1:07.38
Veterans 40: Graeme Davis
Veterans 50: Simon Wix
Veterans 60: Gerry McGarr (Gloucester City CC) 1:02.25

Revo Racing 10 (Buckfastleigh, Devon):

1. Conrad Moss (Mid-Devon CC) 19.42
2. M. Slater (Exe Velo) 20.11
3. L. Bard (Exe Velo) 20.27
4. A. Perkins (Mid-Devon CC) 20.35
5. A. Gourley (Penzance Wheelers) 20.49
6. N. French (St Austell Wheelers) 21.05
7. T. Gilbert (Penzance Wheelers) 21.05
8. M. Smekal (St Austell Wheelers) 21.19
9. L. Obornik (CS Dynamo) 21.21
10. S. H-Thompson (CS Dynamo) 21.22
Veterans: Andrew Perkins
Juniors: Jack Salvidge (Exeter Wheelers) 21.23
Women: Catherine Hilton (NI Tri Club) 23.22

Saturday, September 26

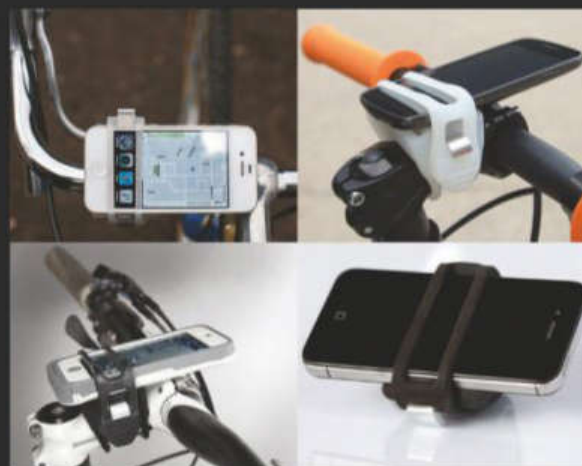
Harrogate Nova CC 10
(Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire):

1. Jonathan Wears
(Team Jewson - MI Racing) 21.10
2. P. Graves (York Triathlon Club) 21.14
3. J. Brearley (City RC Hull) 21.46
4. D. Sleigh (Clifton C.C. York) 22.15
5. M. Wolstenholme (Team Swift) 22.17
6. M. Wilde (HD Revolutions) 22.20
7. M. Schofield (Clifton CC York) 22.22
8. P. Nixon (Seacroft Wheelers) 22.29
9. D. Robinson (Tyneside Vagabonds CC) 22.29
10. R. Brown (Yorkshire Road Club) 22.38
Woman: Eleanor Haresign (Harrogate Nova CC) 24.09
Veteran: Michael Schofield
Junior: Sam Howcroft (Otley CC) 28.27

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SCOTT FOIL 15 DI2 carbon aero road bike. Scott Foil 15 56cm- Aero frame in matt grey - Shimano Di2 ultra full system with internal seatpost battery - Cero AR30 race wheels 1399g total - Deda headset and finishing kit - 2x Cero carbon bottle cages 20g weight - Continental grand prix tyres - Ritchey carbon seat post - Shimano SPD pedals - bar width 42cm - Ultegra cranks 175mm - Bexley. Kent new style micro USB charge/Di2 cable connector under handlebars. The bike is police data tagged with the bikes details on the bike register database. £1840. Bexley. Tel: 07824882055. Email: Richardla_uk@yahoo.com 1/10



TREK SPEED CONCEPT 2.5, 2011. Size Medium. Tyres: Continental (new). Groupset: SRAM Apex changed stock chainrings from a compact to 53/39. Pedals: Look. Recently had a complete full service and not been ridden since - receipt as proof. Can arrange UK delivery for a fee Price: £600. Durham. Tel: 0191 383 0946. Email: lloydharrison@me.com 1/10



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COLNAGO BICYCLE 1990'S 21" Frame, Possibly Spiral Conic, Columbus SLX frame with crimped downtube, 21.5" Top tube, 53/39 Chainset, 8 Speed Cassette, Seat pin: Coppi, Saddle: Brooks Leather Wheels and hubs: Mavic 501, Handlebars and stem: 3tt, Brakes: Campagnolo Centaur, Gears, headset, levers (Ergo): Campagnolo, Forks: Colnago Chrome, Cranks: Campagnolo 170mm, Bottle cages & pump: Colnago, Well used with marks and tarnish £550 ONO. London. Tel: 07973 782394. Email: janunderwood22@yahoo.co.uk 1/10



NEILPRYDE ZEPHYR Frame L full ultra 11 speed 52/34 di2 less than 150 dry miles 11months old Genuine reason for sale. All accessories , chain guard and bottle cages included £2500. Devon. Tel: 07790 327222. Email: bill.blurton@yahoo.com 1/10



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VAN NICHOLAS Tuareg Ti4in MTB Fusion velvet folk . Shimano XT G/set Rapid fire Hydraulic disc's . Mavic Crossmax St rims Van Nic Ti bars S/post Seat Immaculate Con £1500. Wigan. Tel: Dave 07714 332438. Email: jerseyjoeenglish@ntlworld.com 1/10



MERIDA RIDE DISC 3000 Merida Ride Disc 3000, 2015 model, large carbon frame, 20 speed. £800 O.N.O. Stoke - on - Trent. Tel: 07955 914750 1/10



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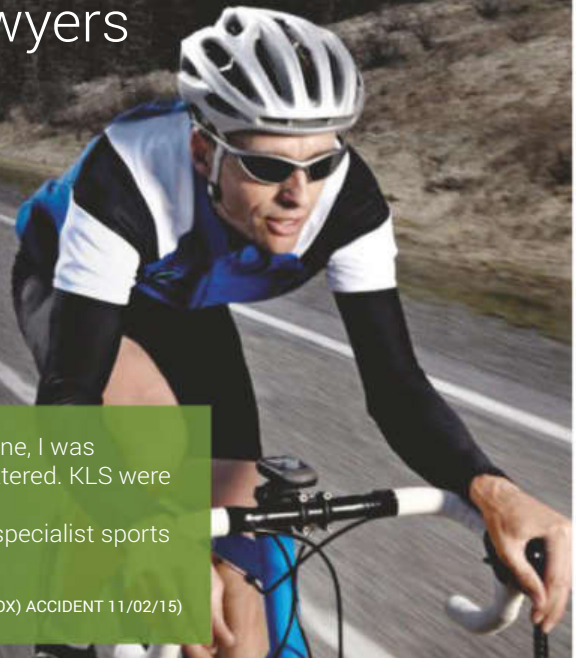
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Dr Hutch

The Doc recalls the day Bernard made a prescient wish: for virtual competition instead of actual racing

doctorhutch_cycling@timeinc.com



I am going to recount to you a conversation I had with my friend Bernard some years ago. He has, as will become obvious, forgotten it, and you must not remind him. I wish to use it against him at an as yet indeterminate point in the future, and I don't want something as good as this spoiled.

We were out on a ride, in the autumn of 2008, not long after I moved back to Cambridge. It was the end of the season. In those days, Bernard was a huge fan of the last races in the year, when all the regular racers' form and motivation was on the wane and approaching parity with Bernard's own perennial half-assed-ness. He was on a roll of results in the actual top half of the field, and didn't want the glory to stop.

"It's ridiculous that we stop racing," he said. "There are loads of nice days all through the winter."

"But we never know when they'll be," I said. "No one would be able to plan races properly."

He thought about this. "Do we really need to schedule the races in

advance? We could just get up and go when there was a nice day."

Do it yourself

I pointed out the obvious problems with this — the main one being that everyone else in the world, other than Bernard, actually has a life.

And then, in an unprecedented and unrepeatable torrent of invention, Bernard outlined a solution. "We don't need to organise races at all. We just have some courses, and you could ride them whenever you wanted, and post your own times. Or... I know, you could log them with a GPS transponder, to prove you'd actually done it.

"Hold on... if you did that, then you could design your own courses. You could just pick out a section of road you liked, and set a time on it. Then you could upload it to a website, and compare it with other people's times. That way, you could have normal time trials, hill-climbs, even downhill sections. Short bits, long bits, anything. You could race where you wanted, when you wanted."

That's right. Bernard invented Strava, and he did it a year before Strava invented Strava. Not only that, he invented something better than Strava. "You could use it for other things," he continued. "If you got all the cafes to upload the calorie-counts for their cakes, it could automatically work out how far you'd need to ride to burn them off. When you got to the cafe, it could tell you what you were allowed to eat."

I pointed out that (at that time) Bernard had a wife who told him what he was allowed to eat,



"Bernard invented Strava — a year before Strava invented Strava"

and he had never yet paid the slightest attention. He gave me a withering look. "This would be worked out by a computer," he said. "Not a five-foot-fascist from Bury St. Edmunds."

Acts of Cycling Stupidity

On the live feed from the World Championships last week, it was often possible to overhear the venue announcer from the local organisers in Richmond, Virginia. He had several genuinely fine moments of commentary. The following was probably not one of them.

"Welcome to the UCI Cycling World Championships! The time is one o'clock. And for our international guests, that's six o'clock Greenwich. Meantime, our race today is over 30km...."

GREAT INVENTIONS OF CYCLING

Training software c.2000

The recent explosion in the use of equipment like GPS and power meters has produced a concomitant huge rise in the use of training software packages. After all, the only thing more guaranteed to bring joy to the heart of a true cyclist than a fine autumn ride on a class machine in good company is reliving the whole thing later through the medium of some graphs and a fuzzy map.

The earliest training software was developed around the turn of the century by teams. One of the more sophisticated early versions was that of the British team.

Among the essential features of that and any subsequent software has been the provision of a number called something like a “training stress score”. This is to tell the athlete how tired they are, to save them the trouble of working it out for themselves based on the hopelessly outdated method of seeing how sore their legs are.

All the software packages currently available are big on graphs. It is, after all, possible to make anything look like progress if you throw enough graphs at it. That is why they are a mainstay of the management consultant’s shtick.

The practically endless analysis options available mean that as soon as you’ve done a single ride to feed into the computer, you can put off indefinitely seeing how fit you are via any means as old-fashioned and lacking in subtlety as getting off your arse and going for another one.

We can only speculate on how much better Eddy Merckx would have been had he had access to suitable training software.



Photos: Andy Jones; Roo Fowler



“Do you really think crossing Big Brother with a bike computer would make you happy?” I asked.

“Of course it would. It would be a bit of fun.”

“But surely you’d end up a slave to these sections you’re talking about. Every ride you did, you’d be trying to break records.”

“That,” said Bernard, “would be the point.”

Finally, just to annoy him, I said: “Anyway, the US government is planning to turn off the civilian

access to GPS. They say it’s helping North Korea to target missiles. Maybe not this year, or next year, but soon.”

“Really? Wow. I never knew that.”

And that was that. The topic was dropped, and seems to have been totally forgotten.

But I’ll remind him one day. Remind him that he could have made millions from a moment of pure inspiration. And then remind him that he was stupid enough to let me talk him out of it.



In its heyday, Leicester track drew huge entries

Leicester Velodrome

Chris Sidwells
remembers a track
that played a big part in
British cycling history

Leicester track was awkward, anachronistic and open to the vagaries of the weather. But it was loved by riders — many of whom started their track cycling careers racing here and went on to Olympic glory.

Built in 1968 to host the track events of the 1970 World Championships, the 3,100-seater venue was afterwards run as part of the Saffron Lane Sports Centre.

Sadly the track has now gone. Left idle after closing in 1999, it was finally demolished in 2008.

Its bumpy 333.33-metre concrete surface was originally painted white, and when the floodlights were switched on the track would shine brightly. The investment was worth it as the British

team enjoyed a successful World Championships, despite the fact the team had almost no funding. Hugh Porter won the professional pursuit title over 5,000 metres, Ian Hallam won a silver medal in the men's amateur pursuit, and the incredible Beryl Burton won a bronze in the women's pursuit.

Amateurs' annual highlight

The Worlds returned in 1982, by which time the track had a new, smoother, wooden surface. It was still a bit odd to ride, with steep bankings for its size and an abrupt transition from banking to straight. But by then almost every keen club racer in the country knew it, because of National Championship week.

Before 1973, national track titles were held at separate track events dotted around the country. Any open track event was free to tender for an event, a process which saw them spread out across the country, throughout the season. Then Benny Foster came along.

Foster was the man behind the 1970 Worlds and was a driving force behind British track cycling in those days. He believed that bringing all the titles together at one meeting would help give young potential internationals a feel for the bigger competitions. He got the sponsors, added a bit of razzmatazz, and riders and spectators flocked to the first National Championship week.

Back then, ambitious club racers weren't shy of taking on established riders, maybe because they were just like them — racers with jobs but who had a bit more talent or application. So many riders entered the distance events at Leicester they had to run heats to thin them out.

Competitor numbers dwindled when British track cycling switched its HQ to Manchester and took National Championship week with it. Now riders from the British squad with stacks of world and Olympic track titles dominate the Nationals, and today's club racers are a bit more reluctant to take them on.



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